

The SPORTS PINK

55p

Supporting **LOCAL** sport **Daily Echo**

**More pain
for Pompey**

BUT FOR A GOOD CAUSE!
— see pages 12 & 13



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LAST DAY DRAMAS



**Saints' seasons have
been packed with them**

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GOING DOWN TO THE WIRE!

**Saints' defeat
means there is still
all to play for**

**MIDDLESBROUGH 2
SAINTS 1**

SAINTS could face a nervy last day of the season after they failed to book promotion and lost out on the chance to win the Championship title with a 2-1 defeat at Middlesbrough.

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AGONY: Dean Hammond can't hide his feelings at the final whistle.

FOOTBALL



Why Rickie is number one

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MIDDLESBRO 2 SAINTS 1: Adkins' team

LOSS LEAVES WITH NERVY

SAINTS could face a nervy last day of the season after they failed to book promotion and lost out on the chance to win the Championship title with a 2-1 defeat at Middlesbrough.

The disappointing reverse at the Riverside, which came despite Billy Sharp giving them the lead after just 46 seconds of the game, meant Reading landed the title which Saints so desperately craved.

Saints are still in pole position to bag the second automatic promotion spot, and will go up on Monday if West Ham fail to beat Leicester.

But goals from Boro duo Nicky Bailey and Merouane Zemmama mean that if the Hammers do win then Saints will need to beat Coventry at St Mary's on the final day of the campaign to be certain of a return to the Premier League.

Saints got off to the dream start as they took the lead after just 46 seconds.

Gordon Simpson

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SPORTS REPORTER



It was a strange goal, coming as it did from an innocuous looking long punt forward.

However, two Boro defenders challenged each other for the ball and only succeed in getting in each other's way.

Saints had space and the ball and made the most of it, Adam Lallana finding Rickie Lambert in the box who squared to Billy Sharp who made no mistake in side footing a volley into the empty net from deep inside the six yard box for 1-0.

It was hard to tell who most shocked – the Boro fans or the Saints supporters, who had produced an impressive sea of yellow behind one goal and had barely stopped celebrating the confirmation of Portsmouth's relegation.

They were quietened a little as Boro roared back, only a great challenge from Jose Fonte preventing Lukas Jutkiewicz from turning home after Faris Haroun's low cross into the six yard box before Barry Robson fired wide in the aftermath.

Robson threatened again on 14 minutes but this time his effort from just outside the area went over the bar.

It was a spirited response from Boro who on another day could have folded but, motivated by the knowledge they needed a win to keep their play-off hopes alive, were throwing everything they had at Saints.

However, the Saints backline stood firm and only a wayward finish from Richard Chaplow,

who fired over the bar from 12 yards out, prevented them doubling their advantage after a superb sustained period of possession.

Justin Hoyte tried his luck with a curling shot from distance but it dipped over the bar.

Chaplow was in again on 32 minutes but just as he went to pull the trigger to surely add another goal Tony McMahon slid in to produce a brilliant last ditch tackle to deny him.

The Saints midfielder continued to cause problems and Merouane Zemmama became the first player in the book for tripping him as he cut in from the right. From the free kick Danny Fox hit an inswinging effort from 25 yards out that flew narrowly wide.

Boro were forced into a change five minutes before half time with Hoyte hobbling off to be replaced by Joe Bennett.

Saints looked like seeing the half through but Boro had other ideas and equalised two minutes into three minutes of stoppage time.

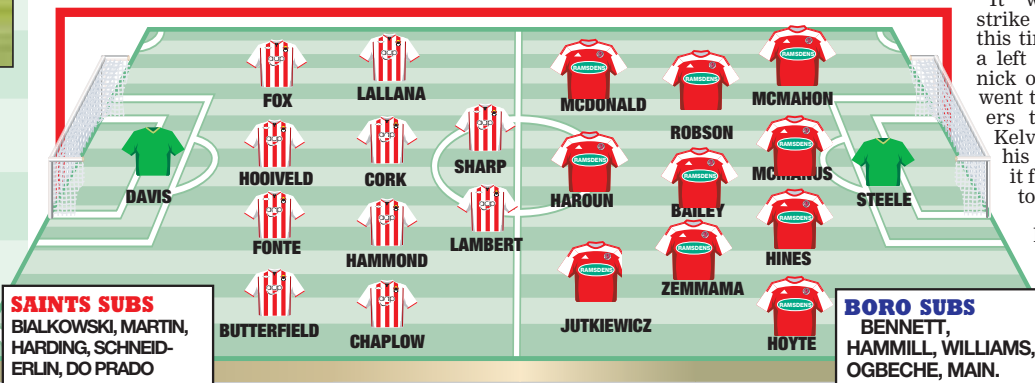
It was unsurprisingly a strike from outside the area, this time Nicky Bailey hitting a left footed shot that took a nick off of Chaplow's leg and went through a crowd of players the ball low and past Kelvin Davis who dived to his left but couldn't prevent it from finishing in the bottom corner.

In the final flurry of the half Jutkiewicz had the ball in the net again but this time the lineman raised his flag for off-side and it didn't count.

Saints started the second period brightly and the pressure told as Bailey went in the

book for bringing down Lallana as he pressed forward. Seb Hines followed after hacking down Jack Cork on the left wing.

Saints' dominance might have bought them a goal had Sharp not flashed a shot over



SAINTS were unchanged once again for the trip to Middlesbrough.

Nigel Adkins felt no need to make any changes to the team that defeated Peterborough in midweek with all his star names com-

TEAM NEWS

ing through the game unscathed.

There was a tactical switch on the bench with the rare sight of a substitute keeper, in the shape of

Bartosz Bialkowski, included in the squad.

Morgan Schneiderlin was also back and available for selection after recovering from a knee injury sustained against Portsmouth in the derby day draw.

FOR THE VERY BEST BORO V SAINTS MATCH REACTION AND

Saints Spotlight

dip after Sharp opener

SAINTS WAIT



BATTLE: Adam Lallana in the thick of the action at Middlesbrough.

RIGHT: Jos Hooiveld tries to keep it tight at the back.

LEFT: Dean Hammond in a midfield battle with Lukas Jutkiewicz.



Middlesbrough's Lukas Jutkiewicz (left) and Southampton's Dean Hammond battle for the ball during the npower Championship match at the Riverside Stadium, Middlesbrough.

the bar from 12 yards out when he should have hit the target.

At least they were getting a grip of the midfield areas in which Boro had been so

strong in the first half and it was creating pressure and chances.

There was a moment of controversy on 55 minutes when Hines brought down Lallana

just outside the area as the midfielder looked like breaking through one-on-one. Saints knew he had already been booked and thought he would be sent off but referee Tony Bates decided a free kick was punishment enough.

Lambert stepped up and put his foot through the ball and his shot flew just wide.

Boro used up their remaining two substitutions on 59 minutes with Curtis Main and Rhys Williams replacing



CELEBRATE: Billy Sharp leaps into the arms of fellow striker Rickie Lambert after Saints take the lead.



Scott McDonald and Robson.

There was real concern for Chaplow moments later as he went down in the area. The midfielder was unable to continue and Guly do Prado took his spot.

Sharp had another sighter of goal on 66 minutes but this

time his shot deflected into the side netting.

Davis had to make his first real save of the match on 72 minutes with a well struck long range free kick from McMahon skipping up off the turf just in front of him and needing turning wide.

Boro got the chance to take a free kick from a central position 20 yards out when Jose Fonte went in the book for a shirt tug which he furiously protested.

They made the most of it as Zemmama took a one step run up and bent it right footed round the wall and into the top corner.

Do Prado tried his luck with a 30 yard shot on 84 minutes but it went over the bar.

Saints made their final change moments later with Morgan Schneiderlin replacing Danny Butterfield. Cork went to right back and Schneiderlin lined up in the centre of the park.

Do Prado came close with two minutes remaining as he instinctively stooped to direct Fox's shot from outside the area towards goal but it went wide.

When the fourth official held up the board it showed five minutes of added time for Saints to find a goal to keep the title dream alive.

But they couldn't find the equalising goal and it meant that the wait for promotion was extended still further on.

ANALYSIS YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO MISS MONDAY'S DAILY ECHO

Saints Spotlight



MAKING THE MOST OF IT



MONDAY'S DAILY ECHO FOR MORE PICTURES AND REPORT

Saints Spotlight



BIG DAY OUT: Southampton fans joined up with a well known face above, to cheer on their team during the npower Championship match at the Riverside Stadium, Middlesbrough, one of the most nailbiting matches of the season.



Pompey relegated

Portsmouth 1 Derby 2
PORTSMOUTH will compete in the third tier of English football for the first time in 30 years after their spell in the npower Championship came to a disappointing end against Derby.

Luke Varney cancelled out Jake Buxton's first-half opener but Steve Davies converted the winning penalty to deprive Michael Appleton, pictured, of even the smallest consolation at the end of a torrid campaign.

With Bristol City winning at home to Barnsley, Portsmouth's fate was sealed anyway, but their disappointment will have been compounded by their failure to finish their home campaign on a high.

The game started scrappily, with both sides struggling to retain possession and create any sort of momentum. It was the visitors who were first to threaten, Jamie Ward finding room to fire off a shot from inside the box but Jason Pearce was on hand to block it behind for a corner which Ward wasted.

The Rams pressed again and Theo Robinson's strike produced a routine save from Jamie Ashdown.

Pompey's first chance to apply some pressure came to nothing when Greg Halford fouled Frank Fielding as Scott Allan whipped in a corner.

Allan then had a go himself with an ambitious 30-yard strike which was diverted off course by Jeff Hendrick.

Frank Fielding was finally called into meaningful action on the half-hour mark, scrambling across goal to tip Joel Ward's effort wide.

Derby were soon back on the front foot and when Ward swung in a delivery from the right, Buxton was unmarked to head home from close range.

Dave Kitson's frustration was evident and he was booked for kicking out at the lively Ward on the stroke of half-time. Fellow striker Varney mounted a more constructive response to the set-

back with a 20-yard shot which Fielding did well to hold onto.

Manager Nigel Clough was forced into a change at the break as the injured Fielding was replaced by Adam Legzdins, whose last appearance for Derby came back in September in the 3-0 win over Millwall.

Legzdins' first task was to keep out Varney's shot from outside the area and he was equal to the challenge. The two had a more bruising encounter moments later as Varney caught the goalkeeper in an attempt to get to a loose ball, leaving the former Birmingham trainee requiring a bandage on his head.

With news of the Robins' progress at



Ash-ton Gate filtering through, the home fans tried manfully to rally their side but Ashley Harris' long-range drive never looked likely to threaten as it drifted wide.

Harris limped off soon after with Marko Futacs, scorer of the winning goal in the dramatic 4-3 victory over Doncaster, coming on to replace

him. Allan then fizzed a shot against the crossbar following a powerful run before Portsmouth finally got their reward with 16 minutes to play.

Futacs slipped in Varney and he coolly slotted past the substitute goalkeeper as their personal duel continued.

The hosts' joy was short-lived as four minutes later Ward was brought down by Pearce in the box and despite Davies' spot-kick striking Ashdown's legs it still found its way in.

Derby held on to win their final away fixture of a league campaign for the first time in 10 years, but the overwhelming emotion at Fratton Park was one of dejection as Portsmouth contemplated life in League One next season less than four years after winning the FA Cup at Wembley.

DAILY ECHO - BEST SAINTS COVERAGE THROUGH THE SEASON

Saints Spotlight



Sky Blues and Blues both drop

PORTSMOUTH and Coventry were both relegated from the npower Championship after losing their penultimate games of the season.

It was no surprise to see the pair join Doncaster in League One next season, though both had hoped for better.

Pompey had home advantage against Derby but went down 2-1. Jake Buxton put the Rams in front before Luke Varney levelled only for Steve Davies to restore the lead from the penalty spot.

Coventry, meanwhile, suffered a humbling 2-0 reverse to already-relegated Rovers.

A 0-0 draw appeared to be on the cards until the last 10 minutes, with James Hayter converting an 81st minute penalty following Richard Keogh's red card and Simon Gillett netting just before the close.

Reading, fresh from sealing promotion, gave title rivals Southampton some hope ahead of the Saints' late kick-off by drawing 2-2 with Crystal Palace.

The Royals had Jason Roberts sent off on the stroke of half-time with the score at 1-1 after Wilfried Zaha's 14th-minute strike and Kaspars Gorkss' swift equaliser.

Reading went ahead through Adam Le Fondre but were pegged back by Glenn Murray 16 minutes from time.

Blackpool confirmed their place in the play-offs with a decisive 4-0 win over Burnley.

Stephen Dobbie, Gary Taylor-Fletcher, Stephen Crainey and Nouha Dicko were the scorers.

Ashley Barnes' 84th-minute leveller for Brighton prevented Birmingham joining the Seaside in the play-offs - at least mathematically - but their goal difference of 25 means they can already make plans for the promotion scrap.

Substitute Nathan Redmond had earlier put Blues in front.

Cardiff dropped to sixth after a 1-1 home draw against Leeds in the early kick-off. Joe Mason's opener was cancelled out by Lucciano Becchio in the 73rd minute.

Hull moved into seventh with a 2-1 win over Nottingham Forest but cannot catch the top six.

A Chris Gunter own-goal and Matty Fryatt's penalty were enough to see off Forest, whose consolation came via Radoslaw Majewski in injury-time.

Bristol City defeated Barnsley 2-0, Cole Skuse and Jon Stead (penalty) on target.

An Andy Keogh brace and a Liam Trotter goal scored Millwall a 3-0 victory at Ipswich, while Peterborough drew 2-2 with visiting Watford.

Lee Tomlin gave Posh the lead with a 14th-minute spot-kick only for Troy Deeney (26) and Sean Murray (48) to turn the tables.

Paul Taylor rescued the point in the 54th minute.

Rickie has it sewn up

THIS is a contest with only one winner.

It's the parents' race at school sports day with Usain Bolt in the field.

It's the local golf club's annual championship with Rory McIlroy on the tee.

It's over, done, beyond any doubt before it's even started.

There might be plenty of outstanding candidates, but they are all playing for second and third place.

Because, let's be honest, only one person is lifting this year's *Daily Echo* Player of the Season award.

And that man is Rickie Lambert.

In his first ever season in the Championship, the striker has broken the 30-goal barrier.

He has overpowered, out-thought and simply demolished opposing defences with astonishing regularity.

He has been not just the league's outstanding forward, but perhaps its best player.

Lambert is not the only reason for Saints' incredible season - but he is undoubtedly the biggest.

Just look at the team when



Gordon Simpson's Saints player of the season 2011/12 top three

Rickie Lambert

Adam Lallana

Jos Hooiveld



PREVIOUS SAINTS PLAYER OF THE SEASON WINNERS: Clockwise from top left - Andrew Davies, Rickie Lambert, Alan Ball, Claus Lundekvam and Chris Baird.

months, although his influence has arguably faded a bit at times in the second half of the campaign.

Hooiveld has added a bit of sparkle to a fairly solid defensive year with some vital goals.

Richardson has been a

consistently high performer at right back, while creating a huge number of goals from that position.

And Davies has enjoyed another stellar campaign, both in terms of performances and his leadership on and off the field.

Picking two out of those four is hard, but I will take Lallana and Hooiveld.

I'm not even totally sure about that.

But, like most people, I imagine, what I am certain about is the winner.



THIS SEASON'S SAINTS FACTS AND FIGURES - SEE PAGE 10

Saints Spotlight

SOME GREAT PLAYERS HAVE WON THE AWARD

Mick Channon was the first ever winner of the Daily Echo Saints player of the season award in the 1973-74 season.

He scored 21 goals in 41 games, an incredible achievement in a struggling Saints side that was relegated, the first ever victims of the new three down system.

It was to be Channon's only player-of-the-season award, but four players have won it at least twice.

Arguably England's greatest ever goalkeeper Peter Shilton was the first Saint to win the player-of-the-season twice and only one of three men to win it in back-to-back seasons.

Shilton first won player of the season in 1984-85 when he missed just one league game all season as Saints finished fifth in the First Division.

SAINTS PLAYER OF THE YEAR HISTORY

73-74 Mick Channon
74-75 Mel Blyth
75-76 David Peach
76-77 Steve Williams
77-78 Alan Ball
78-79 Malcolm Waldron
79-80 Phil Boyer
80-81 Ivan Golac
81-82 Kevin Keegan
82-83 Mark Wright
83-84 David Armstrong
84-85 Peter Shilton
85-86 Peter Shilton
86-87 Glenn Cockerill
87-88 Derek Statham
88-89 Jimmy Case
89-90 Matt Le Tissier
90-91 Alan Shearer
91-92 Tim Flowers

92-93 Tim Flowers
93-94 Matt Le Tissier
94-95 Matt Le Tissier
95-96 Dave Beasant
96-97 Egil Ostenstad
97-98 Paul Jones
98-99 James Beattie
99-00 Dean Richards
00-01 Wayne Bridge
01-02 Chris Marsden
02-03 James Beattie
03-04 Antti Niemi
04/05 Peter Crouch
05/06 Claus Lundekvam
06/07 Chris Baird
07/08 Andrew Davies
08/09 Kelvin Davis
09/10 Rickie Lambert
10/11 Jose Fonte

He retained the trophy the next year as the club finished in mid table.

Another keeper, Tim Flowers, won back-to-back awards in 1991/92 and 1992/93.

During that time he missed only one league match.

Unsurprisingly, Matt Le Tissier is the third man to win successive awards, and he is the only person to win it three times in all.

Le Tiss was voted star man in 1993/94 and 1994/95 after first winning the prize in 1990/91.



FLASHBACK: Echo reporters Adam Leitch, left, and Jeremy Wilson present Peter Crouch with his 2004/05 Player of the Season award.

Swindon going up

SWINDON were promoted to npower League One despite going down 3-1 at Gillingham today.

Paolo Di Canio's side will have been disappointed not to have secured their own promotion - which was confirmed courtesy of Torquay's defeat - but they remain four points clear in the title race with two to play.

Chris Whelpdale scored twice for Gills - who maintain a notional play-off hope of their own - with Danny Kedwell kicking off the scoring and Alan McCormack grabbing Swindon's goal.

Second-placed Shrewsbury missed the opportunity to join the Robins in booking a place in League One as they drew 1-1 with Accrington.

Terry Gornell and Bryan Hughes were the scorers.

Torquay slipped to fourth after goals from Rashid Yussuf and George Moncur condemned them to defeat at AFC Wimbledon.

That allowed Crawley to replace them in the final automatic promotion place after a 1-1 draw at Dagenham.

SOUTHERN Daily Echo SAINTS



HERE'S your chance to vote for your Saints Player of the Season for 2011/12

CALL: 0901 151

Vote Now - Call: **0901 151** adding the last four digits of the player of your choice. For example if it was 1234 that you'd like to win simply dial 0901 151 1234. Calls cost 51p Per Call from BT landlines. Calls from mobiles and some other networks may cost more. Postal votes can be sent by completing this form and send to:

Adam Leitch, c/o Daily Echo sports desk, Newspaper House, Test Lane, Redbridge, Southampton, SO16 9JX.

You can also get a vote in by email, send the name of your player of the season to adam.leitch@dailyecho.co.uk

(please note: only one vote per email address).

Daily Echo

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

POST CODE: _____



Jose Fonte (above) recipient of the 2010/11 Player of the Season.

VOTING BY TEXT -

Start your message with **SAINTSFC** leave a space and then add the four digits of the player of your choice. Then send to **80360**.

You will receive a confirmation receipt and will be charged **50p** plus your normal operator text charge for each text sent. For example **SAINTSFC 1234** and send to **80360**



Richard Chaplow ☐
0901 151 0530



David Connolly ☐
0901 151 0531



Jack Cork ☐
0901 151 0532



Kelvin Davis ☐
0901 151 0533



Steve De Ridder ☐
0901 151 0534



Jose Fonte ☐
0901 151 0535



Danny Fox ☐
0901 151 0536



Dean Hammond ☐
0901 151 0537



Dan Harding ☐
0901 151 0538



Jos Hooiveld ☐
0901 151 0539



Adam Lallana ☐
0901 151 0540



Rickie Lambert ☐
0901 151 0541



Guly do Prado ☐
0901 151 0542



Frazer Richardson ☐
0901 151 0543



Morgan Schneiderlin ☐
0901 151 0544

BEAUTIFUL SOUTH

BY DAREN WHEELER

AND so, by the time you read this, Saints could well be already promoted to the "promised land."

Any kind of result against Middlesbrough would pretty much guarantee us promotion with a vastly superior goal difference and Coventry at home.

Winning 3-1 away from home at Peterborough, when the pressure was surely unbearable, is quite simply astonishing.

It shows the mental strength that Nigel Adkins has instilled in the team.

Saints had to win to keep the pressure on Reading and keep West Ham at bay.

It was squeaky bum time for every Saints fan out there, but obviously this team is made of sterner stuff!

What a spectacular achievement this would be, two successive promotions – surely a resurrection of phoenix-like proportions.

Should we be in that position, then what a party we would have at St Mary's for the last game of the season.

Astonishing

Last year we were probably an extra game off overtaking Brighton; this season we were, in all honesty, a game or two too many off keeping Reading at bay.

Either way, to go from -10 points in League One to the Premiership in just three years is just astonishing.

Sadly I can't let this week's article pass without answering the points raised last week by Peter Simpson.

He can breathe easy, my "obsession" with Pompey is no more.

It is an ex obsession... it is deceased and will finally be no more when Pompey get what they deserve and we get what we deserve – relegation and promotion respectively.

It was somewhat ironic that his letter was printed after... yes, you guessed it, an article about Pompey.

But in the year in which two very different clubs passed in opposite directions, what was Mr Simpson expecting?

For me, getting even with Pompey is what I needed to move on.

Judging by the amount of Pompey songs sung every week, and the intense atmosphere at St Mary's at



IDEAS MAN: Sir Clive Woodward watches as Gareth Bale demonstrates video training.

CHARGE FOR THE PREMIER LEAGUE

OK – POMPEY ARE MY EX-OBSESSION

the derby game showed, I'm not the only one.

They are, sorry, were, the ying to our yang.

Their rise and our demise were grossly unfair and the scales had to be balanced before I, and many others, could move on and enjoy the rise of Southampton Football Club.

That was the ghost I needed to exorcise and so did many other Saints fans, for whom Pompey's rise to our fall was too bitter a pill to swallow.

It is, then, ultimately ironic that Mr Simpson accuses me of being obsessive and then proceeds to have a rant about Rupert Lowe.

I'd hazard a guess and say that that's what's at the root of his complaint.

Apparently, Rupert Lowe, pictured below, never did a good thing in his time here.

Not one. The point about my article about Lowe was to get people to think about the man and his contribution to this club.

To write off everything he did is just as obsessive and blinkered as Mr



Simpson believes I am with Portsmouth.

He sums up the ridiculous nature of it all in one sentence.

"The ground was always on the cards since 1976, and it's an insult to the loyal fans, after what we were put through by RL and his cronies, to give them any credit whatsoever."

Since 1976. That sums it all up.

For over 25 years we never got remotely close to getting a new ground.

We lurched from one idea

to another.

Think about it, a quarter of century to get a new ground.

How blinkered do you have to be to write off Lowe's contribution by saying it was always on the cards for a quarter of a century?

The point of my article was to get people to think, and that obviously fell on deaf ears if apparently Lowe never did a thing right in his time here.

I'd understand if the article was in fulsome praise of Rupert Lowe, but it wasn't.

It was a fully neutral assessment of his time at Southampton.

Where were these voices of dissent when we were at Cardiff in a cup final?

When we were fourth in the Premiership under Strachan?

Not a peep, and if there was no opposition then, then the only conclusion you can reach is that at least sometimes in his tenure at Southampton, Rupert Lowe did some things right.

It was his rampant ego that was ultimately his downfall, but was he that wrong in some of the things he pursued?

Sports science is now common place in football.

Was the Sir Clive Woodward experiment that bizarre?

Had we got an athletics coach in, would people be up in arms?

Why so a rugby coach?

Oh, but he cost £500,000 in wages?

Need I remind anyone of some of the complete and utter waste of wages we've had over the years on players?

Personally, I found Woodward's ideas interesting but, sadly, we'll never know.

Harsh truth

The harsh truth is if Nicola Cortese brought in someone with exactly the same ideas, they'd be listened to.

It would seem it's who presents the ideas rather than the ideas themselves.

I notice that Michael Wilde didn't get a mention in Mr Simpson's letter.

But then again his reckless spending and chaotic reign does tend to get ignored.

Lowe returned to be the ultimate fall guy but people seldom ever mention the man who usurped him and then crawled back to him.

For this club to move on, emotionally if not football-wise, then we have to look back at our past, embrace it and learn from it.

Like it or not, Mr Simpson, we all have our ghosts.

We all have things we have to move on from.

Mine was Pompey, yours is obviously Rupert Lowe.

I've finally moved on and am looking forward to a bright future with the sharpest chairman in English football and the brightest young manager in English football.

In the meantime, I'll make no apologies for having a beef with Pompey and I'll make no apologies for accepting Rupert Lowe did some good things in his time at St Mary's.

It's time for all of us to move on.

EMAIL YOUR VIEWS ON SAINTS TO echosport@dailyecho.co.uk

Paine's World

The Saints legend's **EXCLUSIVE** column on all things football



Errors like Ref Atkinson's must be stopped



YOU'RE WRONG REF! Left to right: Tottenham's Scott Parker, Ledley King and Gareth Bale complain to referee Martin Atkinson after his decision.

SO WRONG!

Chelsea will sing the blues

DESPITE Chelsea's win against Barcelona, I fully expect them to lose their Champions League semi-final.

With 72 per cent possession and 24 goal attempts at Stamford Bridge, Barca would have been shaking their heads in frustration after losing the first leg on Wednesday night.

Chelsea's performance puts them in a much stronger position come next week's second leg at the Camp Nou. Now I must confess, I expected a Barca win and still expect them to be the first team to defend the Champions League.

Yet, on the night, some excellent defensive work and tactics denied Lionel Messi in particular.

The Argentine genius's current goal tally in all competitions stands at 63 (just four off the record set by Gerd Muller in 1972-73). Messi and



HERCULEAN: Chelsea's lone forward Didier Drogba.

co had plenty of the ball but were often forced into a midfield battle where Chelsea outmuscled them.

It took a Herculean effort by Didier Drogba to battle on his own against a resolute Barca defence and still manage to score the goal that mattered.

The 34 year-old's Chelsea future has been questioned but he responded in a positive manner, as he did against Spurs in last week's FA Cup semi-final. Those who suggested his best days are gone may have to think again. He has given his team a massive boost.

Caretaker boss Roberto Di Matteo probably needs to win the FA Cup and qualify for next season's Champions League to be offered the position permanently. But if Chelsea were to get past Barca and win the Champions League, owner Roman Abramovich would have no choice but to instil the Italian as boss at Stamford Bridge.

Particularly as the Russian owner has always said winning the Champions League is a priority and the reason so many managers have come and gone is for failing to do so.

Personally, I think Barcelona will go through comfortably and play Real Madrid in the final.

ONCE more, the debate rages on.

If ever there was a case for goal-line technology then just take a look at Chelsea's second goal against Tottenham in last week's FA Cup semi-final.

Referee Martin Atkinson's 49th-minute decision to allow Chelsea's second goal to stand when cameras clearly indicated the ball had not crossed the line was a crucial decision at a vital moment.

Atkinson's position was perfect, he had a clear view of the situation and yet still came to the wrong conclusion. It was a mistake that was to have a devastating outcome.

Atkinson has had a long tough season but I've been on record before in declaring that he gets too many big decisions wrong. His sending off of Everton's Jack

Rodwell in the Merseyside derby was overturned by the disciplinary panel and he was the man in charge when Manchester City's Mario Balotelli escaped punishment for his horrendous tackle on Arsenal's Alex Song at the Emirates.

There have been many more mistakes which have put Atkinson under extreme pressure, although I had to chuckle when I saw the five officials in charge of the Bayern Munich v Real Madrid first-leg semi-final of the Champions League. All five were English and Atkinson was one of the designated extra officials to stand behind the goal - flag in hand!

This is the preference of UEFA president Michel Platini, who has indicated that goalline technology will not be used in European competition. But I'm sure Atkinson would have appreciated a quick replay which would have given him the facts in a matter of seconds.

In fairness to the Football Association, it has called long and hard for goal-line technology to be



WEMBLEY WOE: Harry Redknapp on the touchline during Spurs' 5-1 semi-final defeat by Chelsea that could have been so different.

used over the last decade. And we can only hope the green light to its use is given when the testing of the technology involved is complete in time for the International FA Board to make a decision on July 2.

Confronted by Harry Redknapp after last week's semi-final, Atkinson acknowledged his mistake before saying he felt worse that the Spurs manager - only to be told "I don't think so."















The simple fact is you can't keep having situations like this. It's time to bring in the necessary technology and end a debate that's been raging since the 1966 World Cup final.

It took the 2010 World Cup to convince FIFA's Sepp Blatter, whose long-held opposition dramatically changed when Frank Lampard was denied a clear goal against Germany.

Saints Spotlight



SAINTS' FIRST TEAM FIXTURES AND RESULTS 2011/12

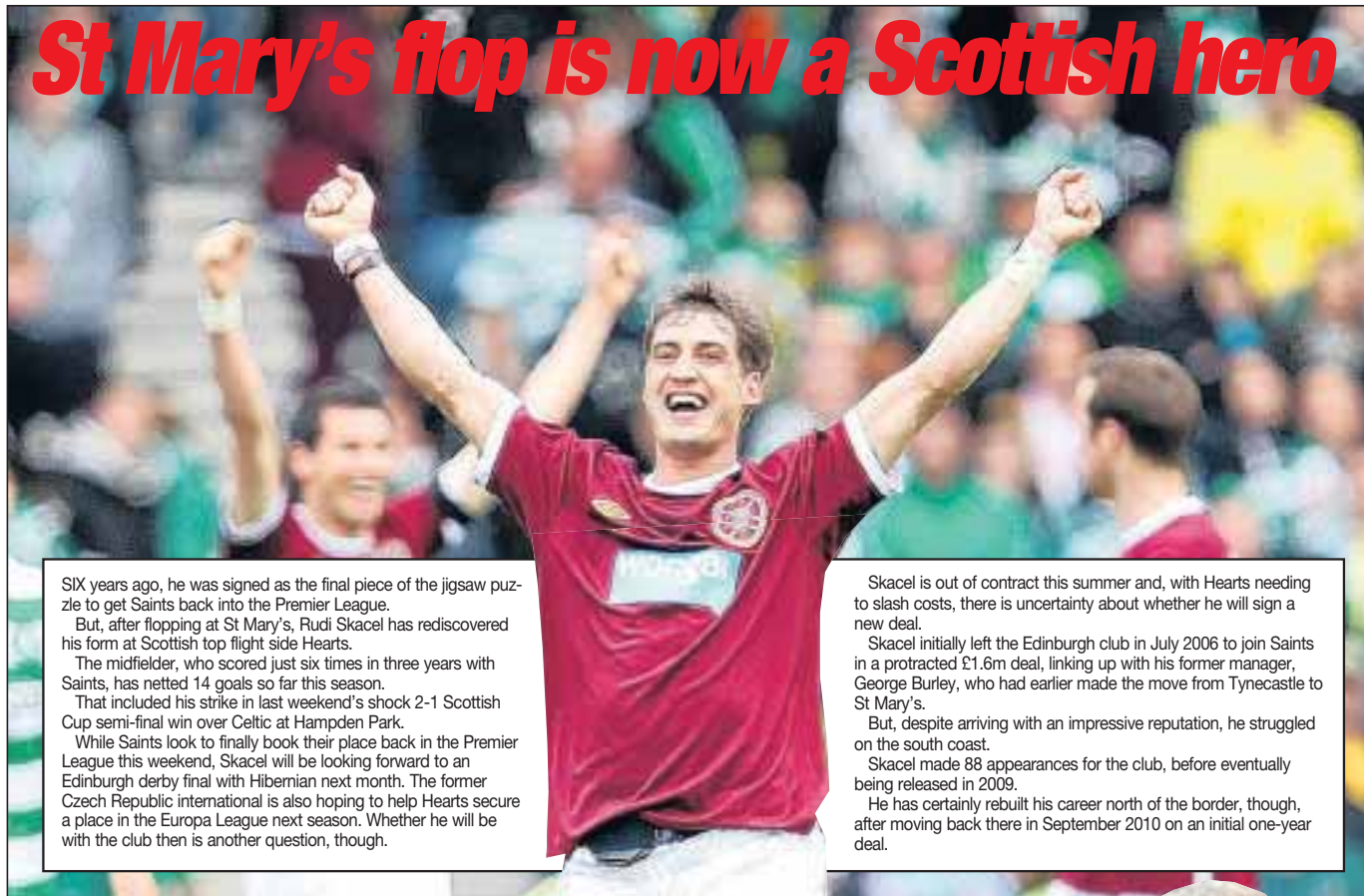
																
AUGUST																
Sat 6 Leeds	H	W 3-1	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Martin	Harding	Do Prado**	Hammond*** 1	Cork	Lallana 1	Lambert	Connolly* 1	De Ridder*	Chaplow**	Schneiderlin***
Tues 9 Torquay (CC1)	H	W 4-1	Bialkowski	Butterfield	Seaborne	Martin	Dickson	De Ridder*** 1	Chaplow 1	Cork	Schneiderlin	Lambert 1	Do Prado***	Lallana*	Hammond**	Forte*** 1
Sat 13 Barnsley	A	W 1-0	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Seaborne	Harding	Do Prado*	Hammond	Cork	Lallana***	Lambert	Connolly** 1	Chaplow*	De Ridder**	Schneiderlin***
Tues 16 Ipswich	A	W 5-2	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Seaborne	Harding	Do Prado*	Hammond	Cork	Lallana*** 2	Lambert 2	Connolly** 1	Schneiderlin*	Fox**	De Ridder***
Sat 20 Millwall	H	W 1-0	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Seaborne	Harding	Do Prado 1	Hammond*	Cork	Lallana**	Lambert	Connolly***	Schneiderlin*	Fox**	De Ridder***
Sat 27 Leicester	A	L 2-3	Davis	Richardson*	Fonte	Seaborne	Harding*** 1	Do Prado**	Hammond	Cork	Lallana	Lambert	Connolly 1	Schneiderlin*	De Ridder**	Fox***
Tues 30 Swindon (CC2)	A	W 3-1	Bialkowski	Richardson	Seaborne	Martin	Harding	Holmes**	Schneiderlin	Cork	Lallana	Forte* 1	Do Prado*** 1	Lambert* 1	Hammond**	Hoskins***
SEPTEMBER																
Sat 10 Nottm Forest	H	W 3-2	Davis	Cork	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Do Prado*	Hammond	Hammond	Lallana	Lambert 3	Connolly**	Chaplow*	De Ridder**	Schneiderlin***
Sun 18 Birmingham	H	W 4-1	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Do Prado* 1	Hammond	Cork**	Lallana*** 1	Lambert 1	Connolly	Chaplow* 1	Schneiderlin**	De Ridder***
Wed 21 Preston (CC3)	H	W 2-1	Bialkowski	Butterfield	Martin	Hooiveld** 1	Dickson	De Ridder*	Schneiderlin	Chaplow	Holmes	Reeves	Forte***	Lallana* 1	Fonte	Lambert***
Sat 24 Burnley	A	D 1-1	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Do Prado*	Hammond***	Cork	Lallana	Lambert	Connolly	Chaplow*	Schneiderlin** 1	
Wed 28 Cardiff	A	L 1-2	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Do Prado	Schneiderlin	Cork**	Lallana	Lambert	Connolly*	De Ridder* 1	Chaplow**	
OCTOBER																
Sat 1 Watford	H	W 4-0	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	De Ridder*	Hammond	Cork**	Lallana***	Lambert 2	Do Prado 1	Chaplow*	Schneiderlin**	Holmes*** 1
Sat 15 Derby	A	D 1-1	Davis	Richardson**	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Do Prado***	Schneiderlin	Cork	Chaplow*	Lambert 1	Connolly	De Ridder*	Hammond**	Harding***
Tues 18 West Ham	H	W 1-0	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld 1	Fox	Do Prado**	Hammond	Schneiderlin	Chaplow*	Lambert	Connolly**	Harding*	Cork**	De Ridder***
Sat 22 Reading	A	D 1-1	Davis	Richardson	Fonte*	Hooiveld	Fox	Do Prado***	Hammond	Cork	Chaplow	Lambert	Connolly**	Martin*	De Ridder** 1	Schneiderlin***
Tues 25 Crystal Palace (CC4)	A	L 0-2	Bialkowski	Butterfield	Martin	Cork	Harding	De Ridder	Ward-Prowse	Schneiderlin	Holmes**	Reeves**	Forte*	Barnard*	Do Prado**	Richardson***
Sat 29 Middlesbrough	H	W 3-0	Davis	Butterfield	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Chaplow	Hammond**	Cork	Lallana**	Lambert	Do Prado* 2	Connolly* 1	Schneiderlin**	De Ridder***
NOVEMBER																
Tues 1 Peterborough	H	W 2-1	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld 1	Harding	Chaplow*** 1	Hammond	Schneiderlin	Lallana**	Lambert	Do Prado*	De Ridder*	Connolly**	Cork***
Sat 5 Coventry	A	W 4-2	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Chaplow* 1	Cork	Schneiderlin	Lallana*** 1	Lambert	Do Prado*** 1	Hammond*	De Ridder** 1	Connolly***
Sat 19 Brighton	H	W 3-0	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Chaplow	Hammond*	Cork	Lallana**	Lambert 3	Do Prado***	Schneiderlin*	De Ridder**	Barnard***
Sat 26 Bristol City	A	L 0-2	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Chaplow	Hammond*	Cork	Lallana*	Lambert	Do Prado***	Schneiderlin*	De Ridder**	Barnard***
Tues 29 Hull	H	W 2-1	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Harding	Schneiderlin	Hammond	Cork*	Lallana 1	Lambert	Do Prado*** 1	De Ridder*	Barnard**	Holmes***
DECEMBER																
Sat 3 Doncaster	A	L 0-1	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	De Ridder*	Hammond	Cork**	Lallana	Schneiderlin	Do Prado	Holmes*	Barnard**	
Sat 10 Blackpool	H	D 2-2	Bialkowski	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox**	Schneiderlin	Hammond*	Cork	Lallana	Lambert 2	Do Prado	De Ridder*	Harding**	
Sun 18 Portsmouth	A	D 1-1	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox*	Schneiderlin	Hammond	Cork	Lallana	Lambert 1	Do Prado	Harding*	Hammond**	
Mon 26 Crystal Palace	H	W 2-0	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	De Ridder*	Schneiderlin**	Cork	Lallana	Lambert	Do Prado 2	Connolly*	Hammond**	
Fri 30 Bristol City	H	L 0-1	Davis	Richardson***	Martin	Hooiveld	Fox	De Ridder	Schneiderlin**	Cork	Lallana*	Lambert	Do Prado	Connolly*	Hammond**	Holmes***
JANUARY																
Mon 2 Brighton	A	L 0-3	Davis	Richardson	Martin	Hooiveld	Harding*	Do Prado**	Hammond	Cork	Lallana***	Lambert	Connolly	Fox*	Forte**	Reeves***
Sat 7 Coventry (FAC 3)	A	W 2-1	Bialkowski	Harding***	Martin 1	Hooiveld	Fox	Schneiderlin	Hammond	Cork	W-Prowse** 1	Lallana	Doble*	Hoskins*	Reeves**	Stephens***
Sat 14 Notts Forest	A	W 3-0	Davis	Harding**	Martin	Hooiveld	Fox	Cork	Hammond	Schneiderlin 1	Lallana***	Do Prado* 1	Connolly 1	Holmes*	Butterfield**	Reeves***
Mon 23 Leicester	H	L 0-2	Davis	Harding	Martin	Hooiveld***	Fox	Cork	Hammond**	Schneiderlin	Falque*	Do Prado	Connolly	Holmes*	De Ridder**	Richardson***
Sat 28 Millwall (FAC)	A	D 1-1	Bialkowski	Harding	Martin	Fox	Richardson	De Ridder*	Hammond	Reeves	Puncheon***	Lambert 1	Barnard**	Holmes*	Lee**	Shaw***
Tues 31 Cardiff	H	D 1-1	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Martin	Fox	Puncheon*	Schneiderlin	Cork	Lallana	Lambert 1	Connolly**	Lee*	Hammond**	
FEBRUARY																
Sat 4 Birmingham	A	D 0-0	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Martin	Fox	Puncheon**	Schneiderlin	Cork***	Lallana	Lambert	Connolly*	Sharp*	Do Prado**	Hammond***
Tues 7 Millwall (FAC replay)	H	L 2-3	Bialkowski	Richardson	Fonte	Martin	Harding	De Ridder***	Hammond	Chaplow**	Lallana 1	Do Prado*	Lee	Lambert* 1	Reeves**	Barnard***
Sat 11 Burnley	H	W 2-0	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Do Prado**	Cork	Schneiderlin	Lallana 1	Lambert***	Sharp*	Connolly*	Hammond**	Lee***
Tues 14 West Ham	A	D 1-1	Davis	Richardson**	Fonte	Hooiveld 1	Fox	Do Prado*	Cork	Schneiderlin	Lallana	Lambert	Sharp***	Puncheon*	Connolly**	Hammond***
Sat 18 Derby	H	W 4-0	Davis	Harding	Fonte	Hooiveld* 1	Fox	Chaplow***	Cork	Schneiderlin	Lallana 1	Lambert	Sharp**	Martin* 1	Lee** 1	Puncheon***
Sat 25 Watford	A	W 3-0	Davis	Butterfield	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Chaplow	Cork	Schneiderlin	Lallana*	Lambert*** 3	Lee**	Puncheon*	Hammond**	Connolly***
MARCH																
Sat 3 Leeds	A	W 1-0	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox***	Chaplow	Cork	Schneiderlin	Puncheon*	Lambert 1	Lee**	Hammond*	Do Prado**	Harding***
Tues 6 Ipswich	H	D 1-1	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Harding	Do Prado*	Hammond	Schneiderlin	Lallana***	Lambert 1	Lee**	De Ridder*	Sharp**	Cork***
Sat 10 Barnsley	H	W 2-0	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Do Prado	Hammond	Schneiderlin	Lallana*** 2	Lambert*	Lee**	Cork*	Connolly**	Sharp***
Sat 17 Millwall	A	W 3-2	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Chaplow*	Hammond**	Schneiderlin	Lallana***	Lambert 3	Do Prado	De Ridder*	Sharp**	Cork***
Tues 20 Hull	A	W 2-0	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld 1	Fox***	Puncheon**	Cork	Schneiderlin	Lallana	Lambert	Do Prado*	De Ridder*	Hammond**	Harding***
Sat 24 Doncaster	H	W 2-0	Davis	Butterfield	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	De Ridder**	Cork	Schneiderlin	Lallana***	Lambert*	Sharp 2	Chaplow*	Barnard**	Hammond***
Sat 31 Blackpool	A	L 0-3	Davis	Butterfield	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Chaplow*	Cork	Schneiderlin	Lallana	Do Prado**	Sharp	De Ridder*	Barnard**	
APRIL																
Sat 7 Portsmouth	H	D 2-2	Davis	Richardson	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Do Prado**	Hammond	Schneiderlin*	Lallana	Lambert	Sharp*** 2	Cork*	De Ridder**	Harding***
Mon 9 Crystal Palace	A	W 2-0	Davis	Butterfield	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox*	Chaplow***	Hammond	Cork	Lallana	Lambert** 2	Sharp	Harding*	Do Prado**	De Ridder***
Fri 13 Reading	H	L 1-3	Davis	Butterfield	Fonte	Hooiveld	Fox	Chaplow*	Hammond**	Cork	Lallana	Lambert 1	Sharp	De Ridder*	Do Prado**	
Tues 17 Peterborough	A	W 3-1	Davis	Butterfield	Fonte	Hooiveld* 1	Fox	Chaplow	Hammond	Cork	Lallana	Lambert	Sharp** 2	Martin*	Do Prado**	
Sat 21 Middlesbrough	A															
Sat 28 Coventry	H															

	LA	LG	CA	CG	CSA	CSG		LA	LG	CA	CG	CSA	CSG		LA	LG	CA	CG	CSA	CSG
KELVIN DAVIS	42	0	1	0	272	0	STEVE DE RIDDER	5(25)	3	5	1	10(25)	4	RYAN DOBLE	0	0	1	0	1	0
BARTOSZ BIALKOWSKI	1	0	7	0	41(1)	0	RICHARD CHAPLOW	16(8)	3	3	1	46(11)	6	DANNY FOX	34(4)	0	3	0	37(4)	0
TOMMY FORECAST	0	0	0	0	0	0	DEAN HAMMOND	29(11)	1	3(3)	0	127(15)	11	JOS HOOIVLED	37	6	2	1	39	7
DANNY BUTTERFIELD	7(1)	0	3	0	46(4)	0	JACK CORK	37(6)	0	4	0	65(7)	0	JAMES WARD-PROWSE	0	0	2	0	2	0
FRAZER RICHARDSON	32	0	4	0	53(7)	0	MORGAN SCHNEIDERLIN	27(12)	2	6	0	129(27)	3	SAM HOSKINS	0	0	0(2)	0	0(2)	0
DAN HARDING	12(8)	1	5	0	110(11)	5	ADAM LALLANA	38	10	4(2)	2	172(19)	46	JACK STEPHENS	0	0	0(1)	0	0(1)	0
RYAN DICKSON	0	0	2	0	19(11)	1	LEE HOLMES	0(5)	1	4(1)	0	21(21)	3	YAGO FALQUE	1	0	0	0	1	0
BEN REEVES	0(2)	0	3(2)	0	3(4)	0	RICKIE LAMBERT	40	27	3(4)	4	148(7)	88	JASON PUNCHEON	3(3)	0	2	0	44(3)	3
JOSE FONTE	39	0	2(1)	0	113(1)	7	LEE BARNARD	0(6)	0	1(2)	0	45(28)	24	TADANARI LEE	4(2)	1	1(2)	0	5(4)	1
RADHI JAIDI	0	0	0	0	67(1)	4	GULY DO PRADO	35(5)	10	3(1)	1	65(18)	22	LUKE SHAW	0	0	0(1)	0	0(1)	0
AARON MARTIN	6(3)	1	8	0	22(7)	1	DAVID CONNOLLY	16(9)	6	1	0	37(30)	17	BILLY SHARP	8(4)	6	0	0	8(4)	6
DAN SEABORNE	4	0	2	0	35(15)	0	JONATHAN FORTE	0(1)	0	3(1)	2	5(10)	4							

KEY: LA: league appearances. LG: league goals. CA: cup appearances. CG: cup goals. CSA: career Saints appearances. CSG: career Saints goals.

Saints Spotlight

St Mary's flop is now a Scottish hero



SIX years ago, he was signed as the final piece of the jigsaw puzzle to get Saints back into the Premier League.

But, after flopping at St Mary's, Rudi Skacel has rediscovered his form at Scottish top flight side Hearts.

The midfielder, who scored just six times in three years with Saints, has netted 14 goals so far this season.

That included his strike in last weekend's shock 2-1 Scottish Cup semi-final win over Celtic at Hampden Park.

While Saints look to finally book their place back in the Premier League this weekend, Skacel will be looking forward to an Edinburgh derby final with Hibernian next month. The former Czech Republic international is also hoping to help Hearts secure a place in the Europa League next season. Whether he will be with the club then is another question, though.

Skacel is out of contract this summer and, with Hearts needing to slash costs, there is uncertainty about whether he will sign a new deal.

Skacel initially left the Edinburgh club in July 2006 to join Saints in a protracted £1.6m deal, linking up with his former manager, George Burley, who had earlier made the move from Tynecastle to St Mary's.

But, despite arriving with an impressive reputation, he struggled on the south coast.

Skacel made 88 appearances for the club, before eventually being released in 2009.

He has certainly rebuilt his career north of the border, though, after moving back there in September 2010 on an initial one-year deal.

EX-SAINTS manager Alan Pardew has put his man-management skills down to his humble roots as a player.

The 50-year-old Newcastle boss currently presides over a squad of home-grown and international players and has managed to mould them into a unit which is sustaining an unlikely challenge for Champions League qualification as the Barclays Premier League season draws to a close.

Pardew, who put in place many of the building blocks of the success Nigel Adkins has enjoyed at St Mary's, was himself a late developer as a player, emerging from the non-league ranks – where he played while working as a glazier – as a 25-year-old before making his name at Crystal Palace.

However, he believes that route into professional football gave him a valuable insight into how best to handle complex characters such as Hatem Ben Arfa, who is currently in stunning form after shedding his tag as France's 'enfant terrible'.

Pardew said: "It was a very important route because you understand the workplace and what the media represents to the working man.

"When I was a glazier, I was reading the newspaper every day and that was my only insight into the football world.

"When you play in non-league football, you meet a cross-section of characters that you don't meet in professional football.

"You might have a company chief executive and a dustbin man playing side-by-side in the same non-league team, so you come across many characters from different walks of life whereas in professional football, you have football-focused individuals who have

Humble roots a help to Pardes

Simon Carter

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SPORTS EDITOR



based most of their upbringing on football because it was going to be their career from day one.

"Due to the playing route that I took, I have experienced diversity of character, so when I come across what may be classed as a 'difficult or enigmatic character' in the football world, it's not much of a problem for me."

Pardew, of course, has also had to manage the antipathy of fans towards the club's ownership in the depths of a fractured relationship, and has done so to superb effect.

The policies implemented by owner Mike Ashley's regime have at times been unpopular, but while issues remain – the re-naming of St James' Park is a constant source of fury – the sound business sense upon which they are based is starting to pay dividends.

Ashley's aim is to make the club self-sufficient, and while he is still owed around £140million in interest-free loans, the Magpies came close to breaking even during the last financial year while thriving on the pitch.

Pardew, who was surprisingly sacked

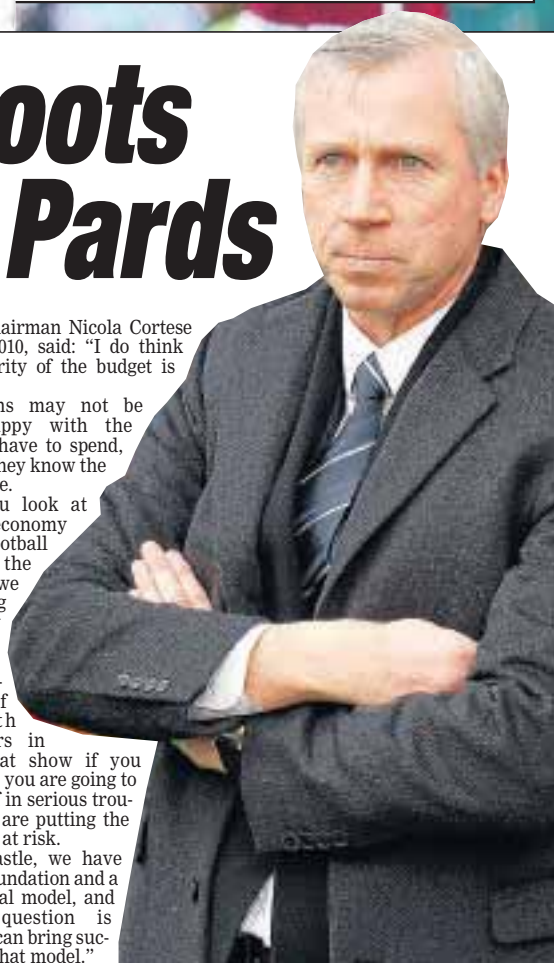
by Saints chairman Nicola Cortese in August 2010, said: "I do think that the clarity of the budget is important.

"Some fans may not be entirely happy with the amount we have to spend, but at least they know the whole picture.

"When you look at the world economy and where football is at the moment, we are seeing some really tough times.

"We have seen examples of Portsmouth and Rangers in Scotland that show if you over-stretch, you are going to find yourself in serious trouble and you are putting the club's future at risk.

"At Newcastle, we have got a good foundation and a good financial model, and now the question is whether we can bring success within that model."



Nightmare carries on for Ryan

SAINTS loanee Ryan Dickson's season ended early last weekend as his Bramall Lane nightmare continued.

The 25-year-old full back suffered the second red card of his nine-game Leyton Orient loan spell as the O's lost 3-1 at Sheffield United.

Dickson was shown a straight red card in the second half for a rash challenge on Lee Williamson.

He would have been in line to face his former club Yeovil Town this weekend, but played no part as he began a four-match suspension.

Dickson picked up a three-match ban automatically for serious foul play.

But as it was his second dismissal – the previous coming at Oldham last month – he will face an additional game on the sidelines.



SEASON OVER: Ryan Dickson was sent off twice in five games for Leyton Orient.

O's manager Russell Slade was in no mood to defend Dickson. "It was a ridiculous decision by my player. I shan't be defending the sending off," he fumed.

Dickson had made his debut for Yeovil on loan back in January of this year at Bramall Lane, where he suffered another loss – this time 4-0!

Signed from Brentford for an initial £125,000 downpayment in the summer of 2010, Dickson made 23 appearances as Saints won promotion from League 1 last term.

But he has not featured in the Championship this season at all.

Prior to being sent off twice in his last five matches, Dickson had never previously seen red in a professional career which began in 2004/05.

There were better fortunes for another ex-Saint in League One last weekend.

Bradley Wright-Phillips' 22nd league goal of the season saw Charlton become the first team promoted from the Football League in 2011/12.

His goal gave the Addicks a 1-0 win at Oldham.

TODAY'S PREMIER LEAGUE RESULTS - SEE PAGE 48

Down Memory Lane



April 21 1956

A day to forget for keeper Fred Kiernan as Saints lost 5-2 at home to Norwich. Kiernan never played for Southampton again.

April 21 1962

Liverpool claimed the Division Two title with a 2-0 win over Saints at Anfield.

April 22 2000

Man Utd clinched another Premier League crown with a 3-1 victory at The Dell. David Beckham was amongst the scorers as United raced into an early 3-0 lead. Marian Pahars replied.

April 23 1949

Eric Day headed in a late equaliser to keep Saints' promotion hopes alive after a 1-1 draw with fellow high fliers West Brom. The crowd of 30,826 remained a Dell record for over 20 years.

April 23 1960

Saints moved to within one point of the Division Three title with a 3-1 victory at Boumemouth. John Page (2) and Brian Clifton were on target.

April 24 1982

Mick Channon scored the BBC goal of the season in an entertaining 3-2 defeat against Liverpool. The goal rounded off a 16-touch move but Phil Neal's stoppage time winner denied the Saints a point.

April 25 1953

Despite battering Blackburn 6-1 at The Dell thanks to a hat-trick from Eric Day, right, a brace from Henry Horton and a debut goal for John Flood, Saints were relegated from Division Two after Bury's win over Nottingham Forest.



April 25 1978

Saints effectively sealed their return to the top flight with a 1-1 draw at Orient thanks to Tony Funnell's header. A pitch invasion ensued with around 12,000 travelling fans celebrating promotion, barring bizarre results on the final day.

April 27 1963

Saints' Wembley hopes were dashed as Manchester United beat them 1-0 in the FA Cup semi final at Villa Park, Denis Law scoring the first half winner.

April 27 1964

Saints ended their season with a flourish, demolishing Rotherham 6-1 at The Dell. That result, combined with 5-1 victories in the two previous games, took Saints' league goal tally to 100 for the league season.

April 27 1974

Lawrie McMenemy's Saints were relegated on the final day despite a 3-0 win at Everton. Goals from Peter Osgood, Mick Channon and Brian O'Neil sealed the points at Goodison Park.

April 27 1996

Saints took a huge step towards Premiership survival with a 1-0 win over rock bottom Bolton at The Dell thanks to Matt Le Tissier's first half strike.

Saints Spotlight

Simon Carter

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SPORTS EDITOR

THE south Hampshire derby honours might have been shared in the Championship, but it's Saints who have grabbed bragging rights among the ex-pros.

The ex-Saints XI defeated a team of former Pompey stars 3-1 in a charity match at Locks Heath last Sunday.

Goals came from David Hughes, Leroy Whale and Franny Benali, with Pompey's late consolation coming from a penalty.

"It was a fantastic day, and it's always great to beat Portsmouth," crowed player-boss Whale.

"It was a really well supported event as well."

This friendly was in aid of the Locks Heath Free Church's Community Building Fund.

The ex-Saints team generally plays up to six friendlies each year, but they are particularly busy at the moment.

Whale must get another squad together for a game against Hampshire Police at Totton & Eling on Sunday, April 29 and also for a game against Team Solent to officially open the university's Test



MASCOTS: Toby, left, and Charlie Hancock.

Picture order no: 14239578

Park facilities on May 20.

Thankfully, he is not short of numbers.

"The ex-Saints association is growing all the time, I think we're the second biggest ex-players association in the country behind Liverpool.

"We look to get a squad of around 25 players, each of whom plays two or three games a year.

"You have to remember there are a lot of aching bones after each match – aching knees, aching ankles, aching backs!

"That's why we've been looking to bring a few more of the 'younger' players through, those who have only recently finished playing.

"The likes of David Hughes, Jason Dodd, Franny Benali and Paul Jones have started playing for us in the last few years.

"Nicky Banger, Jo Tessem, Andy Cook .. they all play. Rod Wallace comes down from Surrey to play a few games too."

The oldest ex-Saint at Locks Heath last weekend was 62-year-old Bill Beaney. But even he must have

Sorry, Pompey



Picture order no: 14239547



Picture order no: 14239587



ALL SMILES: Jason Dodd leads out the Saints team, left. Right: Francis Benali and Linvoy Primus.

felt a comparative youngster compared to the man who led the ex-Pompey side out.

One-time England international Ray Crawford, who is now 75, played the first few minutes for the men in blue.

Crawford was born in Portsmouth and started



WHALE

his career with his hometown club, before moving on to Ipswich Town – whom he helped to the Division 1 title in 1961/62 was 12 months after winning promotion from the second tier.

Whale – who took over managing the ex-Saints XI two years ago after Roy Beasley had done it for over

four decades – admits it is not too hard to get ex-professionals to play for the ex-Saints XI.

"If you ask all the lads, I'm sure they would all say the one thing they miss about playing is the banter," he remarked.

"We have some great laughs in the dressing room, giving each other loads of stick.

"I feel sorry for the refs, because there's a real competitive element

TODAY'S CHAMPIONSHIP REVIEW – SEE PAGE 4

Saints Spotlight



Hampshire
FA

— it's another defeat



GOING FOR GOAL:
Tommy Widdrington, left.

ALL SMILES: Spectators
in high spirits, above.

Picture order no: 14242785

BATTLING AWAY: Martin
Thomas, far right.



Picture
order
no: 14239459

at times in our games.

"No one wants to lose, and the refs do cop some flak when they take charge of two teams of former professionals!"

One annual fixture the ex-Saints have is against Rod Stewart's XI on the singer's own pitch at his house.

Last year former Saints manager Gordon Strachan played for Stewart's side,

as did ex-Dell captain Glenn Cockerill and one-time Manchester United defender Colin Gibson. Stewart, a huge football fan, also plays.

"Rod's got a lovely pitch at his house," said Whale, of the facility where Strachan once took his Saints squad to train prior to a game in London.

The ex-Saints association currently have a hospitali-

ty box at St Mary's, and that has allowed Whale – who played non league football for Yeovil, Bashley and Basingstoke – to see a few games this season.

"Saints deserve to go up automatically," he said. "It would be a big disappointment if they didn't finish in the top two. If they had to go in the play-offs I think they'd be mentally drained."

Anniversary star guest

HAMPSHIRE FA celebrated their 125th anniversary in style with an Under-16 match against Dorset FA, who were formed on the same day 125 years ago.

A thoroughly entertaining match was provided with Dorset winning 2-1 in front of special guest Sir



SPECIAL GUEST: Sir Trevor Brooking makes a presentation to Hampshire FA's John Ward, left, and Dorset's Peter Hough.

Trevor Brooking.

At the anniversary dinner, Hampshire FA made nearly £3,000 on their charity auction and raffle which has been donated to Naomi House Children's Hospice, Cancer Research UK and the Hampshire FA Community Trust.

Over two hundred guests attended the dinner, held at the Marriott Hotel in Portsmouth, including FA General Secretary Alex Horne, Leader of The FA Council Barry Bright and Chairman of The FA National Game Board, Roger Burden.

Playing up

PORTSMOUTH Ladies secured the Hampshire FA Women's Cup Final crown with a 2-1 win over Havant & Waterlooville Ladies at Gosport Borough this week.

Portsmouth also have a great chance of securing promotion to The FA Women's Premier League National, requiring just two points from their last two games against Plymouth and QPR, who are both in the bottom 4.

Junior final

THIS Sunday will see the Sunday Junior B Cup Final (sponsored by JD Fives) take place at Alresford Town between AFC Fareham and Whitenap.

Following this is the Sunday Under-12 Final between Salisbury City and Eastleigh Juniors Youth.

The game of the day takes place at 3pm between Pace Pumas and Salisbury City at Under-13 level.

The Salisbury team won the Under-11 Cup two seasons ago, while Pace were Under-12 winners last season.

ALL TODAY'S RESULTS – SEE PAGE 48

Saints Spotlight

Did You Know?

Didier deal interests Redknapp

TOTTENHAM manager Harry Redknapp would be interested in signing Didier Drogba on a free transfer this summer but admits the Chelsea striker's wage demands may scupper any potential deal.

At 34 years old, many thought Drogba was past it, but he has provided his critics with a timely reminder of his talents over the past few days.

The Ivory Coast frontman, pictured, belted a stunning volley past Carlo Cudicini to help Chelsea cruise past Spurs into the FA Cup final last weekend and then hit the winner in the first leg of the Blues' Champions League semi-final against Barcelona three days later.



Drogba could leave Stamford Bridge this summer after failing to agree a contract extension. And, although Redknapp is interested, he expects the former Marseille

man to be tempted to China, where he is being courted by mega-rich Shanghai Shenhua, who are managed by Drogba's former Chelsea team-mate Nicolas Anelka.

Redknapp said: "He is a free but I was just reading in the paper about him going to China.

"It seems the money in China at the moment is incredible. Players can go there and make a fortune.

"He would be a great player for Chelsea to keep or for somebody else to take. Anyone would be interested but you would have to be able to afford his wages. That is going to be the key. If he is on a free you are going to have to pay him a fortune.

"But he is a powerhouse when he is on his game. He is strong and almost unplayable when he is really at it.

"It was an amazing goal he scored against us. He smashed it from an angle.

"His strength in holding (Spurs defender William) Gallas off and then hitting the ball from where he did, there aren't too many players who could have done that."

DEPENDING on the this weekend's results, next Saturday's home clash with Coventry City could be the latest in a long line of dramatic final day games for Saints.

Here, the Sports Pink looks back at some other memorable last-day encounters – most of which had a happy ending.

**April 30 1960
Saints 2 Bradford City 0**

Saints needed to avoid defeat in order to pip Norwich City to the Division 3 title.

Ted Bates' men had already won promotion three games earlier after Grimsby had won at their nearest rivals 24 hours after Saints had beaten Reading at The Dell.

Sixth bottom Bradford were not expected to present a formidable challenge to Saints, and Derek Reeves opened the scoring on 30 minutes with his 39th league goal of a prolific season.

With 10 minutes remaining, George O'Brien sealed Saints' title triumph in front of a crowd of 21,848.

Despite the importance of the game, the Dell crowd was almost 2,000 down on the attendance figure for Reading's visit 12 days earlier.

**May 18 1966
Man City 0 Saints 0**

Having drawn 1-1 at Leyton Orient nine days earlier, thanks to Terry Paine's header, Saints journeyed to Maine Road knowing they would join their hosts in winning automatic promotion – providing they didn't lose by six goals.

As it was, they didn't lose at all and Saints were in the top flight for the first time in their history.

**April 22 1974
Everton 0 Saints 3**

Despite the comfortable win at seventh placed Everton, Saints were relegated from the top flight.

For the first time ever, the team that finished third bottom were demoted – and Lawrie McMenemy's men sadly had that dubious honour.

Saints had only dropped into the relegation zone the previous Tuesday – for the first time that season – after Birmingham had beaten



LAST-DAY DRAMA: George O'Brien, right, scores against Bradford in 1960.



LAST-DAY DRAMA: Lawrie McMenemy and Keith Burkinshaw appeal for calm in 1978.

QPR 4-0.

If Saints win at Goodison Park, they would stay up if Birmingham lost at home to Norwich, who were already doomed to finish bottom.

Goals from Peter Osgood and Mick Channon put Saints 2-0 up at half-time, and Brian O'Neill completed the scoring.

But Birmingham won 2-1, so Saints went down.

**April 29 1978
Saints 0 Tottenham 0**

A massive clash at The Dell pitted second and third against each other.

Saints were already up, having drawn at Leyton Orient a few days earlier in a dramatic echo of 1966.

But Spurs needed a point to ensure they followed Saints up.

A crowd of 28,846 crammed into the stadium – easily The Dell's biggest of the season – and managers Lawrie McMenemy and Keith Burkinshaw had to go out onto the pitch beforehand to appeal for calm as emotions threatened to boil over on the terraces.

A point suited both sides, and that is what they got. As a result, Tottenham

finished level on points with fourth placed Brighton – who beat Blackpool 2-1 the same day – but went up with a better goal difference.

Had Saints won, Brighton would have gone up and McMenemy's men would have claimed the Second Division title over Bolton on goal difference.

THIS WEEK'S FOOTBALL FIXTURES - SEE PAGE 27

Saints Spotlight

FINAL-DAY DRAMA



LAST-DAY DRAMA: Paul Allen watches Matt Le Tissier score a free-kick at West Ham in 1994.



LAST-DAY DRAMA: Two-goal Marian Pahars in action against Everton in May 1999.

May 17 1984
Notts County 1 Saints 3

A Thursday night trip to Meadow Lane saw Saints needing victory to finish runners-up in the old First Division.

Notts had already been relegated and only 6,035 bothered to turn up.

Steve Moran scored in the second minute, with Trevor

Christie levelling seven minutes later.

Moran restored Saints' lead with his 21st top flight goal of the term before Dave Armstrong made the game safe on 67 minutes.

Had Saints lost, Nott's neighbours Nottingham Forest would have finished runners-up to Liverpool instead.

May 14 1985
Saints 1 Liverpool 1

In what turned out to be Lawrie McMenemy's last game in charge of Saints, a Tuesday night home draw was enough to clinch a UEFA Cup place for the second successive season.

Yet Saints would have missed out on a top five finish had Chelsea beaten

relegated Norwich at Stamford Bridge in their final game the same evening.

John Wark put Liverpool ahead with Dave Armstrong levelling in the second half.

As it was, Saints never got the chance to play in the UEFA Cup the following season because English clubs were banned after

Liverpool fans caused the death of 39 Juventus followers at Heysel 15 days later.

May 8 1993
Oldham 4 Saints 3

Matt Le Tissier hit a hat-trick but finished on the losing side on a dramatic day at Boundary Park.

Though Saints were safe going into the last game, Oldham started the match second bottom.

In order to stay up on goal difference, they needed Crystal Palace to lose at Arsenal and for them to beat Saints.

Joe Royle's Latics did all they could – storming into a 4-1 lead before Le Tissier completed his triple in the 84th minute to set up a nervous finale.

And Palace were beaten 3-0 at Highbury.

Saints finished fourth bottom.

May 7 1994
West Ham 3 Saints 3

A point was enough for Alan Ball's Saints to stay up, though they would have gone down had both Ipswich and Sheffield United won.

As it was, Ipswich drew 0-0 at Blackburn and the Blades lost 3-2 at Chelsea.

Had Saints lost at Upton Park, they would still have stayed up - on goal difference

May 5 1996
Saints 0 Wimbledon 0

One of the most dramatic last-day relegation battles Saints have been involved in.

Former Dell boss Alan Ball and his Manchester City side went down instead after their 2-2 home draw with Liverpool on the same day.

Famously, Ball had been given wrong information regarding the scores elsewhere and, thinking his side were safe from the drop, City played keep-ball for the closing minutes instead of going for the goal which would have kept them up!

Saints stayed up by virtue of a better goal difference – minus 18 compared to City's minus 25.

Coventry finished a place above Saints in 16th with an identical minus 18 goal difference after a last-day 0-0 stalemate with Leeds. Had either Saints or the Sky

CONT ON PAGE 16

Did You Know?

Bale should stay a Spur says Hughes

QPR manager Mark Hughes has urged Tottenham and ex-Saints winger Gareth Bale to remain at the north London club for a few more years before deciding on whether he wants to play football on the continent.

Rumours have resurfaced that the 22-year-old, pictured, is attracting the interest of European giants Barcelona but former Saint Hughes believes his compatriot should stay put for the time being.

He said: "He is still a young man - I think he still has a lot to achieve in the Premier League and I'm sure he is enjoying his football and his life in the Premier League at the moment. He has a huge profile and has no reason to go so young."

"He is playing at a good club that are challenging for honours. I think when he is asked the question he answers it honestly



and says that in the future that is what he might like to do but I don't think he is anticipating moving any time soon."

Hughes joined Barcelona from Manchester United in the summer of 1986 at the age of 22 and reckons he was too young to make an instant impact at the Nou Camp and he left the following summer before eventually returning to Old Trafford.

"I went when I was young and it was probably a little bit too soon for me," he said.

"Ideally if I had had the opportunity later I would have been more successful than I was. I think there is time for Gareth in the future if he thinks that is what he wants to do."

"I went when I wasn't married and didn't have any children and my life wasn't as settled as it would have been at 26, 27, 28 and that always helps when you have that support."

Although he never worked with Bale whilst in charge of Wales Hughes is still a big admirer of his abilities and knows his qualities.

TODAY'S MIDDLESBROUGH v SAINTS DRAMA - PAGES 2-5

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"People will say to me 'Oh, you were in the boozer last week' but it is just rumours going round. Now I just laugh it off. To be honest, I don't go out at all. All I do now is sit in the house with my girlfriend, chill out and watch movies" - **Liverpool striker Andy Carroll** claims his party lifestyle is behind him.

"They have to make something happen because it's killing the league, it's killing the FA Cup, it's killing the game, it's killing everything" - **Emmanuel Adebayor** calls for goal-line technology after **Juan Mata's** strike is allowed to stand during **Chelsea's 5-1 FA Cup semi-final win over Tottenham** despite the ball clearly not crossing the line.

"It wasn't a goal, simple as that, and for that you feel sorry for Tottenham. Goal-line technology needs to be brought in. I think it's a no-brainer" - **Chelsea midfielder Frank Lampard** agrees.

"I spoke to him. He says he feels worse than I do. I said: 'I don't think so'. He knows he's made a mistake and he says he'll have a bad week as well" - **Spurs boss Harry Redknapp** reveals his post-match chat with referee **Martin Atkinson**.

"#1 again without touching a golf club this week.... I wish it was that easy!" - **Rory McIlroy** Tweets his delight at returning to the top of the world rankings following **Luke Donald's 37th-placed finish** at the **RBC Heritage**.

"If I'd have had a premier ref with me this week would have done much better. So many putts that nearly went in that would have been allowed!" - **Tottenham fan Donald** after slipping to second in the world rankings.

"I think in that situation, in the last week or two, yeah. I have never seen that in him. It is not an habitual thing with him. He was brought down. He just made the most of it" - **Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson** admits **Ashley Young** had gone looking for a penalty against **Aston Villa** and might be seen as someone who goes down too easily.

"Ashley Young is an absolute DISGRACE. He's the biggest cheat in the league. His antics are a joke...." - **Newcastle defender Ryan Taylor** leads the chorus of disapproval on Twitter.

"Have just witnessed Young challenge. Was touched but his theatrical reaction could be the springboard to a bad reputation" - former England captain **Gary Lineker** suggests **Young** could end up with an unwanted reputation if he keeps reacting in this way.

"I can't remember in 25 years of refereeing seeing a manager run that far onto a pitch to bully a referee." - **Hugh Dallas**, former head of referee development at the Scottish FA, not impressed with Celtic manager **Neil Lennon's** behaviour in marching onto the pitch to confront referee **Euan Norris** over the award of a late penalty in his team's Scottish Cup semi-final defeat to **Hearts**.

Saints Spotlight

Final fixtures mean drama

From Page 15

Blues lost, they would have gone down.

May 11 1997
Aston Villa 1 Saints 0

A Richard Dryden own goal sentenced Graeme Souness' men to defeat at Villa Park.

But they stayed up as Sunderland lost 1-0 at Wimbledon and Middlesbrough could only draw at Leeds.

Saints had started the day with a goal difference of

minus five, compared to Boro's minus nine, so always knew they would be safe unless beaten very heavily while Boro won at Elland Road. Boro would have stayed up had they not had three points deducted for fielding an ineligible player.

May 16 1999
Saints 2
Everton 0

Two goals from Marian Pahars com-

pleted Saints' Great Escape under Dave Jones.

Despite beating Leicester and Wimbledon in their previous two outings, Saints knew that if they lost or drew at home to Everton and Charlton beat Sheffield Wednesday at The Valley they would be relegated.

As it turned out, Saints could have lost and stayed up as the Addicks were beaten 1-0 by Wednesday.

May 11 2003
Manchester City 0 Saints 1

A financially productive day for Saints in what was the last ever league game at Maine Road.

Michael Svensson's goal lifted Saints three places - which was worth an extra £1.5m in prize money.

Not only did Saints leapfrog City, they also jumped above Tottenham - beaten 4-0 at home by Blackburn - and Middlesbrough, who lost 2-1 at Bolton.

May 15 2005
Saints 1 Manchester United 2

Saints knew that victory over United would keep them in the top flight.

But an afternoon which saw them start third bottom of the Premier League, ended with them bottom.

Nigel Quashie gave Saints an early lead, but Darren Fletcher levelled before half-time and Ruud van Nistelrooy ended Saints' 27-year top flight life.

West Bromwich Albion created history by starting the last day bottom of the table, but still staying up.

To no Saints fans' surprise, they beat Pompey 2-0 at The Hawthorns to move above Saints, Norwich (drubbed 6-0 at Fulham) and Crystal Palace (held 2-2 at Charlton).

May 6 2007
Saints 4 Southend 1

Saints entered the game knowing they needed to beat already relegated Southend to ensure a

Championship play-off place.

If they didn't, Stoke or Preston could overtake them if they won on the last day while Colchester could also do it if they won handsomely at home to Crystal Palace.

Saints and Stoke both had the same points totals and the same goal difference, plus 21, going into their last games.

Southend stunned St Mary's by taking the lead, but Saints hit back through two goals each for Kenwyn Jones and Leon Best.

Stoke only drew with Birmingham while Preston won and Colchester lost.

May 4 2008
Saints 3 Sheffield United 2

Saints started the last game in the Championship relegation zone.

They knew what they had to do - beat Sheffield United at St Mary's and hope Leicester didn't pull off a surprise win at a Stoke City side who only needed a point for automatic promotion.

The Blades twice took the lead, but two goals from Stern John and one from Marek Saganowski kept Saints up - Leicester relegated instead after a 0-0 draw.

There was late drama for Saints when John was sent off, but the final whistle heralded an outpouring of emotion and a memorable pitch invasion by fans.

May 7 2011
Saints 3 Walsall 1

Having won 3-1 at Plymouth the previous Monday, Saints knew they were virtually up unless they lost to lowly Walsall and Huddersfield annihilated Brentford and overturned a 17-goal goal difference.

Neither happened - Saints won while Huddersfield drew 4-4.

Guly and David Connolly put Saints 2-0 up inside half an hour and, though Walsall reduced the arrears, sub Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain completed the scoring on what turned out to be his last competitive game for Saints.



GREAT MEMORIES: Nigel Pearson gives Stern John a kiss after one of his goals against Sheffield United in 2008. Jose Fonte, above, celebrates promotion last year.

NEXT WEEK'S FOOTBALL FIXTURES - SEE PAGE 27

Non-league Football

Don't shout at refs: talk to them nicely and they can be a little on your side!

— says Poole Town keeper Nick Hutchings

SHOULD Poole Town need to indulge in any mind games in their pursuit of promotion, they could unleash their secret weapon – goalkeeper Nick Hutchings.

The 26-year-old glovesman, already decorated as both a Master and Bachelor of Science, is close to completing his training to be a qualified sports psychologist, writes **NICK HUTCHINGS.**

Hutchings has been one of Poole's leading lights in the Dolphins' bid to secure back-to-back promotions.

And with a place in the Southern League Division One South & West play-offs within striking distance, his experience – both on and off the pitch – could prove vital.

Worked hard

Hutchings, who joined Poole from Gosport Borough 14 months ago, said: "I have just handed in a 35,000-word portfolio which took about three years to put together."

"It will get reviewed and, if it is good enough, I will be through the training process and can apply to be an accredited sports scientist, specialising in psychology."

"I have worked hard towards it."

"I did a degree in sports science at the University of Portsmouth and a Masters in sports psychology at the University of Chichester. I am looking to get a position in a professional set-up and would love to work in professional football."



EXCITING STUFF: Poole keeper Nick Hutchings.

Hutchings, who is supervised by Dr Richard Thelwell, head of sport and exercise science at the University of Portsmouth, has gained experience in several sports, including volleyball, netball and athletics.

"It is exciting stuff," said Hutchings.

"I haven't done anything with the lads at Poole and I'm not sure how they would take it."

"But if I were asked, I would be more than happy."

"Games at this stage of the sea-

son are generally quite close and tense."

"If you believe in what you are doing and stay solid, then the goals should come."

While client confidentiality is uppermost in his profession, Hutchings does impart the benefit of his knowledge on to the players during games.

He added: "It is all about how your thoughts control your emotions and your behaviour."

"I don't get too excited when I have done something really

good and I don't let myself get down if I have done something which isn't so great."

"I try to keep my thoughts consistent and try to push that on to the players in the way I communicate with them."

"I never really shout at one of my defenders, I will speak to them."

"It is what I have learned throughout the years."

"It is the same with referees because, if you shout at them, you can turn them against you."

"But if you talk to them in the right way, they can sometimes be a little on your side."

Cool head

"Psychology is definitely massive in football."

"You need to keep a cool head and play your normal game."

"If a game is close, you don't need to get tense and start doing things you wouldn't normally."

"You need to believe in what you are doing and it should come to the fore in the end."

Poole assistant manager James Wood acknowledges holding their nerve will be one of the Dolphins' biggest tests during the run-in and possible play-offs.

He said: "Players and managers get nervous. The players are such an honest bunch and, because they want things so badly, sometimes that can spill over a little. Our job is to calm them down and make sure they keep believing."

"It is not a case of motivating them because the motivation is there and the attitude is spot on."

"Probably our hardest job between now and the end of the season will be keeping them calm."

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"The players will decide whether West Brom become an even better club in the future or whether we sink down again to the 'boing boing', yo-yoing type of club. I was hoping we would take one of the 'boings' out of it and become the boing club!" – **Manager Roy Hodgson is out to abbreviate the Baggies' catchphrase by establishing them in the Barclays Premier League long term.**

"I will continue at Liverpool. It is obvious I will continue" – **Reds striker Luis Suarez rubbishes rumours of an impending exit.**

"Jack Wilshere will not play again this season and will not go to the Euros, that is for sure. What is for sure is he will not be ready for the end of the season and not for the Euros. He is devastated, and you can understand that" – **Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger gives England some bad news.**



"We can all be very proud of the manner in which we performed" – **Wigan boss Roberto Martinez on his side's stunning win at Arsenal.**

"I'm angry because I see the hurt in the players when they give everything but they've had no help, we've had no help, full stop. So that's where we are, that hurts" – **Coventry boss Andy Thorn turns on the club's owners after a 1-0 home defeat to Millwall leaves them facing almost certain relegation to League One.**

"People are looking forward to me running 9.4, 19 seconds, anything that's amazing. So I'm working as hard as possible so I can go as fast as possible" – **Usain Bolt sets his sights on some scintillating times in the 100 and 200 metres at this summer's Olympics.**

"I would say the favourites are now Chelsea because winning 1-0 at home is a very good result for them" – **Barcelona coach Pep Guardiola admits his side are now the underdogs heading into the return leg of the Champions League semi-final after a 1-0 defeat to the Blues at Stamford Bridge in the first leg.**

"I trust in the FIA that they know all the information - I don't personally - so we have to trust in their decision" – **McLaren's Jenson Button says he has faith in the FIA's decision to go ahead with the Bahrain Grand Prix.**



"It is the heartbeat, the very DNA of this organisation and a rallying cry for the athletes to come to the UK to perform at their very best and inspire the world" – **London 2012 chairman Sebastian Coe on the Games' motto, 'Inspire a generation'.**

"What I do know is this European qualification is about as complicated as it gets. We need Carol Vorderman to work this one out" – **Newcastle manager Alan Pardew phones a friend after Chelsea's domestic and European cup exploits complicate the Premier League picture.**

Saints Spotlight

Royals may be loaded

READING sealed a Premier League return after four years away with a 1-0 victory over Nottingham Forest.

Russian tycoon Anton Zingarevich is close to completing a takeover meaning Royals boss Brian McDermott may soon have cash to splash.

He will already be planning ahead to ensure the Royals emulate Norwich and Swansea next season by remaining in the Premier League.

Here, the Sports Pink takes a look at their promotion-winning squad and assesses where they will need to strengthen in the summer.

GOALKEEPERS

Adam Federici has kept 20 clean sheets in the Championship this season but the 27-year-old has never started a Premier League game. His understudies include Danish youngster Mikkel Andersen and England under-21 prospect Alex McCarthy. Neither have played in the top flight so McDermott may look to bring in an experienced keeper.

DEFENDERS

Reading have the tightest defence in the league, having conceded just 37 league goals this term. Ian Harte, 34, will relish his first top flight appearance in four years although McDermott may need more pace to stop the likes of Nani and Theo Walcott.

Latvian international Kaspars Gorkss, 30, and academy product Alex Pearce, 23, have developed an impressive partnership but both will be making their Premier League bow.

At right-back former Chelsea prospect Shaun Cummings, 23, has kept the vastly experienced Andy Griffin out of the side this season.

McDermott faces a difficult decision over whether to keep faith in his young defence.

MIDFIELDERS

Reading have a production line of exciting wingers in Jobi McAnuff, Jimmy Kebe and Hal Robson-Kanu while ex-Saints loanee Michail Antonio has impressed on loan at Sheffield Wednesday.

In the middle Mikele Leigertwood has been rock solid while 23-year-old Jem Karacan could be one to watch in the Premier League.

STRIKERS

Reading boast one of the most envied strike-forces in the Championship.

Jason Roberts was one the signings of the January window and he will be keen to impress after he was frozen out at Blackburn.

His work ethic is matched by Irish international Noel Hunt, 29, while 23-year-old Welshman Simon Church and prolific Football League marksman Adam Le Fondre, 25, are highly thought of.

Le Fondre is the only man with a goal return in double figures so McDermott's priority may be a Premier League striker.

VERDICT

Reading have followed the Swansea and Norwich philosophy of appointing a talented young manager who has assembled an exciting young squad.

Zingarevich is already making a shortlist of new players and has ambitious plans for stadium expansion.

But the Royals' best chance of staying up is keeping this tight-knit young squad together - and adding a striker with Premier League class.

IMAGINE Saints entering the current season having had to sell Jose Fonte from their successful team of 2010/11.

Then, just a days into the new campaign, imagine them having to sell Rickie Lambert, *writes SIMON CARTER.*

Then imagine them losing four of their first six league games.

From those body blows, you would not, therefore, expect them to go on and win automatic promotion.

But that's what Reading have achieved, and even the most diehard Saints fan should be doffing any caps they wear to Brian McDermott and his remarkable Royals.

Ex-Saint Matthew Mills was a key member of the Reading defence when they reached the Championship play off final last May, losing 4-2 to Swansea.

A few weeks later he was off, joining his former Manchester City manager Sven-Goran Eriksson at Leicester City.

He probably thought he stood a better chance of returning to the Premier League with the Foxes, and most neutrals would have agreed.

Even more so when Reading then lost their 21-goal top scorer of 2010/11 Shane Long, who joined West Bromwich Albion after playing in the first league game of this season.

That saw sub Mathieu Manset score twice in the last four minutes to earn the Royals a 2-2 home draw with Millwall.

Reading then won 2-0 at Leicester before losing four games in a row.

On September 10 the Championship table showed Doncaster bottom after six games, and there they have stayed.

Reading, though, were second bottom.

Fast forward to the end of November and Saints held an eight point lead over the third placed club - nine if you include a better goal difference.

They were 15 points ahead of the Royals - 16, including the goal difference.

At that stage, no-one was contemplating the Berkshire club as automatic promotion material, and no wonder.

But they have shown remarkable consistency with a spectacular run - 46 points out of 51.

Fifteen wins in 17 games, including victories at Saints and West Ham.

Saints have spent the entire season in the top two - top after 34 of their matches and second after the other 10 going into this weekend's game at

ROYALS ARE A

Macs' memory lapse

IT was April 1990 and I was enjoying one of the greatest nights of my young life.

I was at St James Park, Exeter, watching my hometown club win promotion from the old Fourth Division. It was the first time I had ever seen us go up.

We beat Southend 2-1 with our winger scoring the promotion-clinching second.

At the final whistle I ran on the pitch with hundreds of other delighted Grecians fans and gave our match-winner a pat on the back.

"This is my best moment

in football," stated Reading boss Brian McDermott after the Royals had won promotion in midweek.

I was aghast.

How could reaching the Premier League be any better than scoring a goal that gave an unfashionable club from Devon promotion almost 22 years ago to the day!!!!?

Yes, Brian McDermott was the winger who received my pat on the back.

All true football fans will appreciate it when I say that McDermott has almost certainly forgotten that moment, but I never will ...

SIMON CARTER

Middlesbrough.

West Ham have spent 24 of their first 44 games in the top two, while Reading have spent just nine.

All those have been their last nine, though, adding fuel to those who (rightly) claim leagues are a marathon rather than a sprint - even if it appears the Royals have been showing Usain Bolt-like speed in recent weeks.

I am totally neutral when it comes to appreciating Reading's success.

They have not spent their way to promotion - indeed, a s

already mentioned, they have lost their top players - they are happy to champion their own youth policy, and they have got their rewards for placing a rookie manager in

charge at a high pressure level.

Saints chairman Nicola Cortese has admitted he would love to see his club's first team crammed full of academy products, in the same way as

Barcelona have done.

But only one - Adam Lallana - was in the squad which lost to Reading at St Mary's recently.

Though others have played first team football this season - Ben Reeves, Sam Hoskins, James Ward-Prowse - Lallana has been the only regular member of the squad brought through Saints' highly successful academy.

Reading's own academy is not as well known as Saints', and indeed have not produced any world class performers like Gareth Bale recently.

But four regulars this season came through their

TODAY'S CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS - SEE PAGE 48

Saints Spotlight

BIT SPECIAL!

JUBILATION: ex-Saints loanee Alex Pearce celebrates Reading's promotion. Below: Adam Le Fondre celebrates one of his goals (inset).



youth system – one-time Saints loanee Alex Pearce, Jem Karacan, Hal Robson-Kanu and Simon Church, all of whom have made over 30 Championship appearances.

McDermott certainly has assembled the classic mixture of youth and experience.

He has bought in the latter with some canny purchases.

Such as one-time Leeds star Ian Harte, who joined the Royals in August 2010 from third tier Carlisle on his 33rd birthday. Many might have thought Harte's days were behind him, but McDermott has given him a ticket back to the big time in the twilight

of his career.

Such as Kaspars Gorkss, who was on Nigel Adkins' radar last summer before Saints and QPR could not agree a deal for the man who helped Neil Warnock's Hoops to the Championship crown in 2010/11.

Such as Hayden Mullins, who joined the Royals only a few weeks ago due to Pompey's financial circumstances.

Such as Jason Roberts, who moved to the Madejski Stadium in January of this year aged 33.

He has used all his Premier League knowledge to great effect, and his header that put Reading on the way to victory at St

Mary's with his sixth in 15 appearances.

That might not sound a great goal tally, compared to someone like Rickie Lambert, but it's worth to the

Royals cannot be underestimated given their top scorer has only just entered double figures.

Adam Le Fondre took his league tally to 11 after coming off the bench against Saints to score twice late on.

In his previous outing, again as a sub against Leeds on Good Friday, Le Fondre also scored a late double to give Reading a 2-0 win.

I wrote in the Sports Pink last week that it was impossible not to feel glad for the likes of Lambert and his former Rochdale colleague Grant Holt, given that both men had known what life is like to go to English football's lesser lights on a midweek night in the depths of winter in front of a few thousand supporters.

Remarkably, Le Fondre – like Lambert and Holt – is a former Rochdale striker too.

Interestingly, he is a former Stockport colleague of Lambert's as well.

In fact, Lambert was on the pitch when Le Fondre made his first ever professional appearance in the 2004/05 season.

Coming off the bench, Le Fondre scored against Bury in a Football League Trophy tie.

Le Fondre, below left, later followed Lambert in moving from Stockport to Rochdale, prior to moving on again to Rotherham United.

It was from there that he joined Reading last August for around £300,000.

Fair play to McDermott, for taking a chance on a fourth division striker who had never played at Championship level.

He has been rewarded handsomely for his foresight.

There is no doubt Le Fondre knows where the goal is, though.

After scoring his double against Saints, he averages a goal every 0.41 Football League appearances.

That is a ratio even better than Lambert's 0.39 – and not many strikers can say that.

It is nice to see young English managers doing well, at a time when so many top clubs have gone foreign.

Brendan Rodgers has won many plaudits at Swansea this term, while – who knows? – McDermott and Nigel Adkins could be in the same boat next season, rubbing shoulders with the likes of Mancini, Jol and whoever happens to be in charge at Chelsea.

It's a goal – or is it?

IT is seven years since Jose Mourinho described a goal scored by Liverpool's Luis Garcia against his Chelsea side in a Champions League semi-final as: 'A goal that came from the moon.'

Mourinho doubted that the ball had crossed the line and last weekend Chelsea were again involved in a similar incident, with Juan Mata's strike in their FA Cup semi-final against Tottenham being given by referee Martin Atkinson, despite replays showing the shot was blocked on the line.

The incident has reopened the debate surrounding video technology and here, the Sports Pink looks at goals that were and were not given, when the opposite decision could have been forthcoming.

Luis Garcia: Liverpool v Chelsea, 2005

In a Champions League semi-final, Liverpool's Luis Garcia sent his side through when his hooked effort was awarded by referee Lubos Michel, despite Chelsea defender William Gallas claiming he had cleared it from under the bar. Liverpool progressed to win the final, with Chelsea boss Jose Mourinho left to say: "It was a goal from the moon or the Anfield Road stand, I don't know where."

Frank Lampard: England v Germany, 2010.

World Cup ties with England and Germany are notoriously tense and this was no different. With England reeling from an early German barrage, they thought they were back in the game when Frank Lampard took aim from 20 yards and appeared to score when the ball bounced down off the bar. The officials disagreed and, although replays showed Lampard had scored, Germany went on to win 4-1.

Frank Lampard: Chelsea v Tottenham, 2011

Chelsea midfielder Lampard was involved again, this time profiting from a decision. His edge-of-the-box strike was fumbled by Heurelho Gomes and, although the keeper scrambled back to halt the ball on the line, a goal was given.

John Eustace own goal: Watford v Reading, 2008.

An innocuous Reading corner hit Watford midfielder John Eustace and flew wide of the goal. Play broke down and the players returned to their positions, only for referee Stuart Atwell to wrongly believe the ball had hit Eustace and gone in.

Clint Hill: Bolton v QPR, 2012.

In a battle between two relegation-haunted sides, Clint Hill thought he had given QPR the lead when he headed a Joey Barton cross in.

Goalkeeper Adam Bogdan scrambled behind his line to save and, although replays showed Hill had scored, linesman Bob Pollock assured referee Martin Atkinson he had not and Bolton went on to win.

CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND-UP - SEE PAGE 4

SOUTHERN
Daily Echo

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If there is still no entry showing the exact centre of the ball, the process is repeated until there is an exact centre of the ball winner.

If there is more than one winner the jackpot will be shared and, similarly, if there is more than one runner-up the nearest miss prize will also be shared.

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Daily Echo

Non-league Action

EVO-STIK SOUTH & WEST: SHOLING 2 HALESOWEN 3

Blow to Sholing play-off plans

SHOLING damaged their chances of landing home advantage in the Evo-Stik South & West play-offs by slipping to a 3-2 home defeat against Halesowen this afternoon.

With Lee Bright and Dave Marden ruled out, the Boatmen were shorn of their two first-choice centre backs, so ex-Saint Kevin Gibbens dropped back to cover along with full-back Mike Carter.

Their rearguard problems looked to have intensified six minutes in when left-back Marc Diaper went down injured on the by-line.

While he was receiving treatment, ten-man Sholing scored with a route-one goal with eight minutes gone.

Wendy Gee

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NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

The ball was played back to Sholing keeper Lee Webber whose long kick up-field bounced between the Halesowen centre back and top scorer LEE WORT managed to get his head to it, run on and tap into an unguarded net.

With Sholing well in command, Wort shaped to volley in a second at the far post from Barry Mason's cross, but Halesowen managed to close him down.

Three minutes later Marvin McLean cut out a sloppy cross-field pass and weaved his way into the left of the area. He beat the keeper, but the visitors had a man back to clear and, as the ball came back into the box,

Byron Mason's header drifted over.

Play was then held up again for Halesowen striker Ben Haseley, who was accidentally poked in the eye.

Halesowen soldiered on without him and they too scored when down to ten men with 23 minutes gone.

Spencer Blackham found MARCUS JACKSON on the right and he cut inside and drilled the ball low and hard into the far bottom corner of Webber's net.

With Haseley unable to continue substitute Nathan Jones replaced him.

Sholing kept battling and reclaimed the lead with just over half-an-hour gone. Barry Mason, a lively presence on the right, delivered a low cross which keeper Paul Evans failed to hold. Wort couldn't convert it

but the ball broke for BYRON MASON to rifle home.

That was followed by another early substitution for Halesowen with Jean-Michel Gueyes replacing Nathan Jackson.

Half-time:

Sholing 2

Halesowen 1

Sholing came out intent on putting the game to bed and it needed an excellent goal line clearance by Peter Folkes to keep out Barry Mason's powerful, low cross-shot. They should have had a third on 58 minutes but McLean got his shot all wrong after Wort had laid the ball across to him when he might have done better to have a shot himself.

Lewis Fennmore then sent a long-range effort over before another superb Barry Mason cross was fractionally too high for the diving Tyrone Bowers.

Just after the hour goalkeeper Webber was forced off after taking an earlier knock.

His replacement Mike Hookway responded by brilliantly parrying Blackham's point-blank shot, but Marcus JACKSON was on hand to bury his second of the afternoon.

Sholing responded with Byron Mason playing in Wort, who drilled a low shot wide.

But Halesowen sensed they could get more than just a point and Hookway again did well to deny skipper Brendan Kelly with his legs.

Wort had another stab at goal, but this time his shot went straight at keeper Evans.

The Sholing striker then won his side a free-kick 25 yards out, but Bowers launched it well over.

The visitors lost another player to injury - Andrew Westwood limping out of the action following a strong but fair challenge by Carter.

But, for all their problems, it was the Midlanders who won it with five minutes remaining when Gibbens was penalised for hand-ball in the area and Marcus JACKSON completed his hat-trick from the penalty spot.

goalkeeper Stuart Searle made a good save from Daryl McMahon.

Eastleigh thought they had won it when, in the 83rd minute, a cross from Daryl McMahon was converted by ANDY FORBES.

Before the match Forbes had been presented with the supporters' player-of-the-year trophy.

Four minutes later Chelmsford were awarded a penalty following a foul on Ricky Modeste and the penalty was converted by DAVID RAINFORD.

Before the end Eastleigh substitute Jordace Holder-Spooner and Will Aimson had shots saved.

from Daryl McMahon in the 17th minute.

Chelmsford made a slow start but, as the half progressed, they began to play some good balls across the field. But Jack Dovey was never troubled in an uneventful first half. Half-time: Eastleigh 0 Chelmsford City 0

Chelmsford got their first ever point at Eastleigh's ground but, in the light of other results, it may not be enough in the final analysis for the Essex club to reach the play-offs.

Eastleigh came close with Danny Smith and Philip Appiah having efforts only narrowly off target and

Totton need win

Stourbridge 2 AFC Totton 1
DESPITE taking the lead midway through the first half, Totton fell to a defeat which still leaves them needing a win next week to secure their play-off spot.

Stags keeper James Bittner was kept busy during the opening stages and was forced to punch clear several times as the home side looked to build on their early pressure.

But against the run of play Totton took the lead after 25 minutes when Michael Charles' cross was met by Nathaniel Sherborne who saw his shot well saved by Lewis Solly before JONATHAN DAVIES pounced on the loose ball and fired home from close range.

Eastleigh are held

Eastleigh 1 Chelmsford City 1
Eastleigh went into this match hoping to finish as high as possible in the Blue Square Bet South table and at least maintain a top half of the table placing. While Chelmsford were needing the points in their hunt for a play-off place.

Eastleigh recalled Gary Elphick, Bradley Bubb and Lee Peacock to the starting line-up and it was Bubb who stung the hands of Chelmsford goalkeeper Stuart Searle in the fourth minute, forcing him to save at the expense of a corner.

Searle also made a routine save

Chudy on song

LEE Chudy's hat-trick put Hamworthy United on course to equal their highest ever Wessex League finish - and their best under current boss Simon Browne.

Chudy's treble in last Saturday's 4-1 home win over Alton Town kept the Hammers in sixth place and guaranteed them to finish at least in the top nine.

"We have been in great form recently," said Browne. "The win over Alton was our eighth in ten games. If we could beat Brading in our final match (away next Saturday), it would be a fantastic finish. I am so proud of what the players have done.

"If we had been more consistent we would be looking at a much higher finish."

Alton, fresh from their midweek win over champions Winchester City, cancelled out Greg Horlock's early opener through Ryan Ayling.

But Chudy restored the Hammers' lead before adding a well-taken second-half double.

"Even if the scoreline was perhaps a little flattering, we thoroughly deserved to win," said Browne.

Hamworthy, meanwhile, are on the lookout for a new chairman now that Bruce Scammell has decided to step down.

Scammell, previously club president, is bowing out at the end of the season.

He will remain at the County Ground and continue to support the Hammers as often as he can, but feels he has taken the club as far as he can.

"Hamworthy United would like to put on record their eternal thanks to Bruce for helping take them from a mid-table Dorset Premier team to a well established top-half Sydenhams Premier side," said a club spokesman.

Anyone interested in taking over as Hammers chairman should contact club secretary Peter Gallop on 07897 959270.

Boro are hit by FA

THE decision to dock Farnborough five points for financial irregularities has been upheld by the Football Association.

The points deduction related to failure to complete financial documentation correctly and a bounced cheque to the Inland Revenue in November.

Going into today's penultimate round of matches, it left Borough just four points clear of third-to-bottom Hampton & Richmond Borough, who have a game in hand on them in the Blue Square Bet South.

Farnborough boss Spencer Day admitted he was at an "all-time low" after the FA rejected the north Hampshire club's appeal against the punishment dished out by the Football Conference in February.

Day, who was not at the club in November, said: "It's a harsh punishment and extremely unfair on the playing staff, but I can understand the decision of the FA.

"The mitigation went very well indeed and we were given a fair hearing. The simple fact of the matter is that the club were guilty.

"To say I am feeling low right now is an understatement. It's incredibly hard to take. But what can you do - curl up and die or stick together and battle on?"

Non-league Football

Non-league News

Tallack focus on Town
LOAN star Lewis Tallack wants to put talk of his future on the back-burner and focus on helping Poole Town realise their promotion dream.

Tallack, a first-year professional with Championships strugglers Portsmouth, has been a revelation since joining the Southern One South & West outfit last month, playing a big part in getting them into the play-offs.

The Waterlooville-based, 19-year-old defender, pictured above, is out of contract at Fratton Park in the summer but said: "I am just taking things one game at a time. Things have gone brilliantly for me since I came to Poole and I am enjoying every minute of it."

Hospital Cup final

THE Salisbury Hospital Cup final will be staged at Salisbury City FC's Raymond McEnhill Stadium home on Wednesday, May 2.

The semi-finals, both all-Sydenhams Wessex League affairs, are: Amesbury Town v Laverstock & Ford (April 25) and Bemerton Heath v Downton (April 30).

Stockbridge awards

FOUR members of Stockbridge FC are to receive North Hants FA 'Service to Football' awards.

Trevor Dance, Mavis Savage, Peter Savage and Mike Bailey will be presented with the awards at the club's disco and social evening on May 4. Further good news for the Sydenhams One outfit is that they have been granted planning permission for new changing rooms at their Recreation Ground home.

Portchester on rise

AFC Portchester as good as sealed a top-two Sydenhams One promotion place with a 2-0 victory over Fleet Spurs at Wicor Recreation Ground last Saturday.

Going into today's penultimate game at third-placed Team Solent, they were six points clear of the Southampton Solent University side in second spot – and with a vastly superior goal difference.

Kyle adds 'stopper' to his football CV



EX-SAINT Kyle Critchell has added a new role to his Dorchester Town repertoire – as a goalkeeper.

The 25-year-old, pictured left, a versatile defender/midfielder, stepped in as a makeshift glove-man at home to Staines Town in the Blue Square Bet South last Saturday.

Former New Milton and Poole 'keeper Nic Jones dislocated a finger during the warm-up and, with no suitable replacement on the bench, full-back Critchell offered to don the gloves.

He filled the void admirably, pulling off two fine saves, but was

ultimately helpless to prevent a 3-0 defeat.

Own goals from Nathan Walker and Neil Martin and a late Gareth Risbridger strike proved the Magpies' undoing, but boss Phil Simkin said: "Fair play to Kyle for having the nerve and the courage to put his hand up and say he'd do it."

"We did limit them to actually getting at him, but it really dictated the way we played. We were half afraid to go forward as we were trying to protect Kyle."

"The two own goals summed up the day. When it goes wrong, it goes wrong big time."

"Nic came over to me and said he'd dislocated his finger, but I just laughed and said it's not April Fools' Day. We tried to get his finger put back in, but it wouldn't happen."

Dorchester-born Critchell joined Saints as a trainee in 2003 after being spotted playing for Weymouth's reserves.

He suffered a broken ankle in the second leg of the 2005 FA Youth Cup semi-final, but went on to sign a professional contract.

Cruciate ligament problems followed and he left Saints for Chesterfield via a loan spell at Torquay.

Wendy Gee

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NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

EASTLEIGH wrecked Welling United's unbeaten home record last Saturday with a starting eleven containing three teenagers and a trio of 22-year-olds.

But while Ian Baird could afford to gamble on youth with no promotion battle to be fought, next season will be a different matter entirely, according to the street-wise Spitfires boss.

Expectations are sky high at the Silverlake Stadium now that Bridle Insurance are on board. And, having been handed the financial tools to build a title-challenging squad, Baird will be expected to deliver the dream ticket of promotion.

Eastleigh, though, remain committed to developing their own talent, as well as importing it, and it will be down to Baird to strike a balance as he looks to lead the club to the promised land of the Blue Square Bet Premier.

Last Saturday 19-year-old Saints loan keeper Jack Dovey started along with 17-year-old duo Will Aimson and Sam Wilson.

Keeping the average age down were 22-year-olds Mitchell Nelson, Phillip Appiah and Michael Green, while teenage defender Ben Wilson was on the bench.

Asked his thoughts on the chances of sticking with a largely youthful side for 2012/13, Baird said: "It's very pleasing to see players like Sam Wilson, Will Aimson and Ben Wilson in the team, but it hasn't changed my mind about next season."

"Can we play three teenagers and get ourselves promoted? Honestly? The answer is 'no'."

"But saying that, it was good to see the young players in there last week beating a Welling side who had come off the back of five clean sheets."

"Tactically we did a job and the future looks to be in good hands."

"We played very, very well and scored a good goal through Danny Smith. It was an amazing result really."

"I'm always a bit surprised and intrigued at how well these young players can do."

"But has it changed my mind about

EASTLEIGH YOUNG GUNS SPIT FIRE



POTENTIAL: Eastleigh teenager Sam Wilson (blue/white).

what we need for next year? No."

Baird, though, is not ruling out the chance of another Aaron Martin success story.

Three seasons ago Martin was brought into the side during a central defensive crisis and ended up playing a key role in the club's most successful ever Blue Square Bet South campaign.

That clinched him a dream move to Southampton where he has established himself as a first-team squad regular since signing in November 2009.

"We'd had a 25 per cent budget cut that year and we had a lot of injuries," Baird, pictured right, recalled. "Aaron came in against AFC Wimbledon, did ever so well and kept his place throughout."

"There's always room for that to happen again."

"If young players are doing well, there's always food for thought."

"But, at the same time, I know that if I'm at Eastleigh next season I've got to get us promoted."

Will Aimson, on the brink of signing a one-year scholarship for Championship side Hull City, had a first taste of Conference South football in the 1-0 win at Welling.

"Will can be pleased with his debut," said Baird. "We played three at the back with Andy Forbes as sweeper and Tom (skipper Tom Jordan) took on a bit of responsibility with Will, just as he did with Aaron Martin."

"Unfortunately we lost Sam Wilson

to a hamstring injury at half-time, but he did well up front in the first half."

"The average height of Welling's back three must have been 6ft 3in, so any time the ball was in the air Sam was not going to win it."

"But if it came to his feet, he looked after it and brought people into the game."

"There are not many 17-year-olds playing first-team football at this level and Sam has got tremendous potential."

Sam Wilson has another year left on his Eastleigh contract and the club were this week due to offer contracts to Aimson, Ben Wilson and fellow bright sparks Matt Gray and Callum Casson.

"Can we play three teenagers and get ourselves promoted? Honestly? The answer is 'no'."

FOOTBALL FIXTURES FOR THE WEEK AHEAD - SEE PAGE 27

Non-league Football

EX-SAINT CLOSE TO ALL-TIME BEST

Winchester hitman White needs four more goals

EX-SAINT Jamie White fired himself to within seven goals of the all-time Wessex League scoring record at Brading Town last Saturday.

The Winchester City star took his tally to 49 with a four-goal burst at Vicarage Lane as the newly-crowned Sydenhams champions romped to a whirlwind 8-0 victory.

It left Harefield lad White with two games – starting at home to his old club Totton & Eling today – to catch former City hotshot Andy Forbes, who set the Wessex record of 55 goals in 2003/04.

City boss Guy Butters said: "Jamie was fantastic once again at Brading.

"What people forget is that while we were all having time off last summer, he was in Australia playing, so he's had two seasons back-to-back and he's knackered.

"He's had flu lately and that's his body letting him know how tired he is.

"But he's come back and was really good value for his goals.

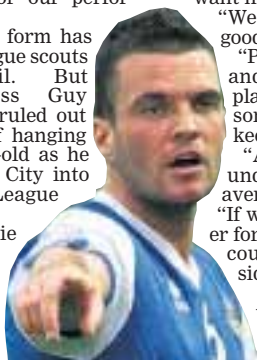
"He could have got seven or eight against Brading.

"Their keeper (Gareth True) made plenty of saves.

"As a team we could have had 15 goals to show for our performance."

White's prolific form has had Football League scouts on his trail. But Winchester boss Guy Butters has not ruled out the possibility of hanging onto the 22-year-old as he prepares to lead City into the Southern League next season.

"Whether Jamie



TOP MARK:
Andy Forbes.



RECORD CHASER:
Jamie White, left.

Wendy Gee

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NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

wants to stay I don't know, but we want him to," said Butters.

"We've had the benefit of a really good, young squad this season.

"People like Jamie, Dom Allen and Chris Mason have all played higher and these are the sort of players we're looking to keep.

"At least ten of the squad are under-25 and I'd imagine the average age is only about 21.

"If we can keep this team together for three, four or five years, we could develop a real quality side."

Winchester round of their title-winning campaign away to Fareham Town next Saturday.

Butters helps Beck boss it

MARTIN Beck is not ready for management just yet, but the Winchester City number two enjoys learning his trade alongside boss Guy Butters.

The injury-plagued former Eastleigh frontrunner/wideman, pictured, has been a key member of City's backroom staff this season and has even managed the occasional run-out off the bench en route to the Sydenhams Premier Division title.

"Working with Guy has been brilliant, I've learned so much from him. He's been there and done it at the highest level," said Beck.

"And there's (club owner) Paul McCarthy as well. He's been brilliant for both us.

"The atmosphere this year is the

best by a mile I've ever known at Winchester and I've organised us a trip to Liverpool at the end of the season. I love organising that sort of stuff."

Although Beck might one day make management material, for now he is just happy to keep learning from ex-Spurs, Pompey and Brighton defender Butters and play as and when he can.

"When Butts asked me to be his number two in pre-season, I said yes straight away, but I still feel I can play for another couple of years," he said.

"Mind you I'm moving slowly backwards," he smiled. "I started off as a striker, went to left midfield and then left-back. I'll be goalkeeper next!"



Non-league News

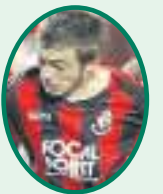
Moth won't stay idle
NEW Milton Town had a day off last Saturday – but not so their dual-signed striker Alex Moth.

With no Sydenhams Premier game to play in, the youngster, pictured below, linked up with his parent club AFC Bournemouth and was named on the bench for last Saturday's trip to Bury after Shaun McDonald and Donal McDermott had dropped out.

Interim Cherries manager Paul Groves considered throwing Moth on in the latter stages of

Bournemouth's 1-0 npower League One defeat, but instead sent defender Miles Addison forward to join Wes Thomas and Lyle Taylor in attack.

But Groves, who offered Moth a professional contract last week, has not ruled out using the 18-year-old before the end of the season.



Confidence boost

BEMERTON Heath Harlequins got back to winning ways on Monday night – just in the nick of time.

Beating Newport IOW 3-0 at Western Way will have restored confidence for today's Wiltshire Senior Cup final against Calne Town at Chippenham and Tuesday's Russell Cotes Cup final trip to Christchurch.

Jack Slade (below), Kane O'Keefe and Eddie Perrett secured victory

over a Newport team who had won three on the bounce in the Sydenhams Premier, but travelled to Wiltshire without

several key players due to work commitments.

The Harlequins had looked to be on course for three points at home to Fareham last Saturday when Graham Mankin and O'Keefe put them 2-0 up.

But Jimmy Cuthbert reduced the arrears on the hour and Wayne Boud levelled from the spot before Graham Lindsey scored a spectacular winner for the Reds.



TODAY'S NON-LEAGUE RESULTS - SEE BACK PAGE

Non-league Football

Non-league News

Magpies cause flutter

A THREADBARE Wimborne Town side lost out 2-0 to Dorchester Town in Tuesday's Dorset Senior Cup final – but not before giving their Conference South opponents a mighty scare.

Wimborne's rookie striker Ben Mogg could have been awarded a 62nd-minute penalty after being caught by Magpies' stand-in goalkeeper Dan Floyd, but Mogg was booked for simulation.

Steve Cuss's, pictured, Southern League underdogs more than



matched their higher grade opponents until an inspired substitution by Dorchester boss Phil Simkin turned the tide.

Sub Anthony Carlisle was fouled and Kyle Critchell nodded down Nick Crittenden's free kick for fellow ex-Saint Jamie Gleeson to sidefoot home his first goal of the season with 16 minutes to go.

Carlisle was then involved again deep into stoppage time, chasing down a lost cause and crossing for Crittenden to blast a half-volley which 'keeper Jason Harvell parried. It fell nicely for Ryan Dovell to tap into an empty net.

Totton stage sixes

AFC TOTTON are staging a six-a-side tournament at the Testwood Stadium on the weekend of May 19 and 20.

Entry costs £25 and is open to boys sides from under-nines through to under-14s. Please visit the club's website at www.afctotton.com to download a tournament invite and entry form. Closing date for entries is April 27.

Paolo v Whites

THE 2011/12 campaign is not quite over yet, but Salisbury City have already announced the first of this summer's pre-season matches against Football League opposition.

Subject to approval by the Wiltshire FA, the Whites will host Paolo Di Canio's Swindon Town on Friday, August 3 (7.45pm).

MEW MOVES ON OVER

Now manager's resignation may lead to a mass exodus

WAYNE MEW is quitting as Romsey Town boss at the end of the season, describing the club's financial situation as "untenable."

Mew and his management team have performed wonders in their second season in charge, leading the Bypass Ground outfit to two cup quarter-finals and a potential top-eight finish in the Sydenhams Premier Division.

But with no budget to work with and, Mew, pictured below, says, no other money available next season, he is unable to carry on.

"We said we needed money to start next season and the chairman said there's none in the pot, so I don't know what they'll do about replacing kit, affiliating with the Hampshire FA and so on," he said.

"I've contributed in the past, but I can't afford to do it again. I don't mind if it's coming from both sides, but it doesn't seem to be.

"Romsey's a sleeping giant and I thought I could turn it round, but I've not been able to on the financial side."

Mew will not be the only key figure leaving the By-Pass Ground after next Saturday's final league game at Alton Town.

His resignation is certain to trigger a mass exodus of backroom staff with assistant boss Stuart Long, coaches Andy Darnton, Dave Smith and Ian Knight and physio Dave Penny all following him out of the door.

"Stuart (Long) had meetings with the chairman to sort out finances and we were told after last Wednesday's game against Totton & Eling that there was no money for next season even to get the team into the league," said Mew.

"We said we needed money to start next season and he said there wasn't any.

"It's very disappointing that you build a squad up and then this sort of thing happens.

Wendy Gee

wendy.gee@dailyecho.co.uk

NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

"I thought we had money in the club because there have been several new (advertising) boards gone up. Work's been started in the clubhouse now, but we've been told there's nothing there for the start of next season."

It's a familiar story for Romsey who, two years ago, lost bright, young boss Glenn Burnett after he had established them as a top-ten club.

Burnett cited personal and family reasons for leaving, but he had also been dragged down by a lack of behind-the-scenes help which left him and his assistant Lee Harrison with much more than just football on their plate.

When Burnett's team disbanded, former Eastleigh reserve/youth boss Mew successfully rebuilt the squad from scratch and also set about recruiting extra help behind the scenes, including commercial director Craig Buckingham.

But, since Buckingham's departure, it has been an uphill struggle to keep things ticking over.

"I don't know where the club will go now if they haven't got the early-season finances which we had last season when the commercial guy was here," said Mew.

"Whether or not the chairman's got concerns that we were doing a bit too well, I don't know.

"Perhaps he doesn't want us to take the club forward as quickly as we have."

"I don't know what he wants to do or where he wants to go with it.

"It's been an enjoyable couple of seasons with the players and it's disappointing it's ended this way. But the financial situation is untenable. There's nowhere to go with it."



Charles shows



MICHAEL Charles returned to the AFC Totton fold last Saturday – and it was as if he had never been away.

After two months on loan with his old club Farnborough, the 24-year-old clicked straight back into the scoring groove with a hat-trick as Arlesey Town were destroyed 6-0 at Testwood Park.

Before Charles's departure, Totton had been banging in goals galore in the Evo-Stik Premier Division with six strikers – Charles, Nathaniel Sherborne, Stefan Brown, Mark Osman, Nathan Jack and the newly-arrived Ryan Moss – to choose from.

But without Charles on the scene, Totton suffered an uncharacteristic goal drought, drawing eight out of 13 league games and losing another two

to lose ground on league leaders Brackley.

Admitting he was pleased to be back with the Stags, Charles said: "I didn't leave on a bad note.

"There were six strikers here and we weren't all getting a game. It just worked out that someone was interested in me, so I was the one to go.

"I enjoyed it at Farnborough, they're my local club. And having been in and out of the Totton side, I enjoyed playing 90 minutes.

"I love it there, but I love it here as well. With the second month of my loan due up, I had to decide whether to come back or stay where I was.

"Farnborough wanted to extend the loan, but Totton had some injuries and it was mutu-

Stop paying players pleads Romsey

ROMSEY Town chairman Ken Jacobs admits he is mystified by Wayne Mew's reasons for resigning as manager of the Sydenhams Premier Division club.

Mew tendered his resignation this week because Town's financial situation had become "untenable."

But Jacobs, pictured right – a Romsey committee member since 1980 and chairman since 2005/06 – says Town's financial outlook for 2012/13 is not vastly different to any other season.

"There's not going to be a lot of money, there never is," he said.

"But we've got enough to get by.

"We will still be in the league and all the cups and we'll start getting adverts in at the start of next season.

"Every year we struggle, so I don't know what the difference is now. Maybe it's a bit worse this year because of the financial climate, but one way or another we'll get it sorted.

"At the moment, there's nothing I can give. But we've got parties coming up and two or three months down



the line I might be able to give something then for expenses and that sort of thing.

"But we don't pay players and never have done. You're talking a minimum of £16,000 for a playing budget and there's no way we could afford that, least of all now when money is so tight everywhere."

As for Mew contributing to team costs out of his own pocket, Jacobs said: "I tell managers not to do that.

"Sometimes Wayne would dip his hand into his pocket to pay for Isle of Wight trips and things like that, but I told him not to."

Although Jacobs is "disappointed" by

Mew's resignation, it's nothing he hasn't dealt with before during his Romsey roller-coaster ride.

"We've moved forward, gone back and struggled and then got there again. It's always up and down," he said.

"The trouble is that people rely on club chairmen chucking money in right, left and centre to pay players, but I think the league should step in and stop payments altogether. That way everyone would be in the same market.

"Players all want paying now whereas football used to be a hobby.

"We've had no playing budget at Romsey

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NON-LEAGUE STORY TO TELL? CALL WENDY GEE ON 023 8

Non-league Football

ER MONEY MATTERS

vs he can be king



BACK WITH A BANG: Michael Charles celebrates netting against Arlesey.

y agreed that it was best
ame back.
Stu (Ritchie) said he
nted me focused and
ady to help them with
play-off push."
Whereas at Farnborough
Charles played on his own
front "getting battered
ery week", he had
thaniel Sherborne for com-
ny last Saturday.
etween them, they netted
e of Totton's six goals and
was touch-and-go which
e would get a hat-trick.
Me and Sherbs have always
d a good understanding,"
d Charles.
n pre-season people said
wouldn't be able to play
ether because we're too
ilar.
But I like to come off
enders whereas he stays

on the last man, and when
you have that connection it's
so easy.

"Either one of us could have
had a hat-trick, but I'd always
put my toe in before Sherbs if
I could! I've never seen a
strike partner put his head in
his hands like he did when my
third one went in!

"I enjoy every goal I score,
but the first one was the most
important because it settled
everyone down."

Having not seen Totton play
during his time with
Farnborough, Charles is sur-
prised they didn't give cham-
pions elect Brackley a closer
run for their money.

"Playing like that (against
Arlesey) I don't know how
they haven't been getting
results," he said.
"No matter which partnership

Badger (Ritchie) was putting up
there before, we were banging
in the goals.

"Maybe they needed a bit of
banter in the dressing room,"
he smiled. "It had gone a bit
dead. Perhaps that's why they
brought me back!"

Charles's contract runs out at
the end of the season and he
has no idea what lies in store
for 2012/13.

"My contact's up and I'm
open to offers," he said.

"I've hit the 20-mark for the
season (18 for Totton, five for
Farnborough) which is what
every striker aims for and I've
done well for Farnborough and
quite a few other Conference
South clubs.

"But I'm here at Totton at the
moment and it's whether we
can sit down and talk for next
season."

chief Town 'start from scratch' again

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ld be right across the league.

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at it and then pulling out and
that's it, there's no commit-

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people going into clubs throw-
at it and then pulling out and
I brick wall to hit.
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esigning is another headache
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COACH Andy Darnton says it's a crying shame that the
Romsey Town rebuilding job has been cut off in its
prime.

With a top-eight finish on the cards this term, the
potential was there to establish Town as one of the
Sydenhams Premier's leading lights of 2012/13.

But now that manager Wayne Mew has tendered his
resignation due to the club's "untenable" financial situ-
ation, it looks as if the Bypass Ground outfit will have
to start again from scratch this summer - just as Mew
did two seasons ago.

Darnton, who joined Town's management team earli-
er this term following the collapse of Andover FC, said:
"From a football perspective we've put Romsey on the
map, but when we asked about the operating costs for
the ground, groundsman, electricity, entry fees, travel-

ling and so on, the chairman said he didn't have it.

"It's a great shame because, with four additions to
the team, I think we could have challenged for the
league next year. We've built the foundations and cre-
ated a good spine. If we'd added to that, we could
have kicked on.

"But it came as a real bolt from the blue to hear
there's no money for the running costs of the club, let
alone any sort of budget for the players.
"We're all very disappointed and we spoke to the
players after last Saturday's game.

"They're a good bunch of lads and we've really
turned things around this season.

"It looks as though we may finish eighth now, which
is disappointing because we wanted top-six. But it's
still a great achievement to have reached the quarter-

finals of the Wessex League Cup and Hampshire
Senior Cup and finished top-eight on no money at all.

"We'll be professional to the end and give it 110 per
cent until after the last game. If we could possibly get
up to sixth or seventh, that would crown a fantastic
season."

On a personal note, former Bashley defender and
Andover assistant manager Darnton has thoroughly
enjoyed his time at the Bypass Ground.

"Romsey's right on my doorstep and it suited me to
come here after what happened at Andover," he said.
"The players have really responded and we've worked
well as a management team.

"If Wayne and Stu (assistant manager Stuart Long)
find a job somewhere else, I'd love to work with them
again."

Non-league News

Heads could roll!

ANGRY Christchurch boss Graham Kemp
has warned that heads could roll for
Tuesday's (April 24, 7.45pm) Russell
Cotes Cup final against Bemerton Heath
Harlequins at Hurn Bridge.

Kemp was spitting feathers after goals
from Darren Powell and Kyle Levrier sen-
tenced Priory to their second straight
Sydenhams Premier Division defeat at
Newport IoW last Saturday.

The 2-1 loss came just four days after
Bournemouth Poppies had left Hurn
Bridge as 2-0 midweek winners.

Although Mark Smith managed to halve
the deficit at Newport, Christchurch fell
well below expected standards and
Kemp has threatened to wield the axe for
their forthcoming cup final double header.

Following Tuesday's Russell Cotes final,
they face Division One outfit
Brockenhurst in the Sydenhams Wessex
League Cup final at Bemerton's Western
Way headquarters on May 7.

"We created a lot of chances at
Newport, but I was very disappointed
with the players and let them know in no
uncertain terms that the past two games
had not been good enough," said Kemp.

"A week ago I felt I had 17 players at
the top of their game, all fighting for cup
final places. But after the past two
games, I wouldn't be able to pick a team
with any confidence."

And he warned: "Nobody is guaranteed
a place and some big players are going
to miss out.

"Our preparation was perfect and, for
the first time this season, I laid the blame
100 per cent at the door of the players.

"Their minds may have been on the cup
finals but, at this level, you can't pick and
choose when you want to play."

Admission for Tuesday's Russell Cotes
Cup final is £6 adults and £3 conces-
sions.

Nine-goal Sholing

SHOLING Reserves saved the best' til
last in the Wyvern Combination League.

Having wrapped up the inaugural
Premier Division title, Dave Fear's cham-
pions toasted their success by destroying
Wimborne Town 9-1 on Wednesday led
by five-goal Daniel Mason.

Sholing scored after just 35 seconds
through new under-18 sensation Tom
Ashton, making his starting debut for the
reserves.

By half-time they were 4-0 up with Alex
Sawyer and Mason (2) clipping the
Maggies' wings.

Jamie Craven was introduced after the
break and had a hand in a blistering burst
of three goals in four minutes from Ryan
Lambert, Mason and Ashton.

The Boatmen also had two goals disal-
lowed and hit the woodwork four times.

Left-back Jamie Mansell went off injured
with 20 minutes to go, but still Sholing
greedily bagged two more Mason goals
before Wimborne hit a last-minute reply.

Delighted manager Fear said: "We have
waited all season for that!"
Sholing's second string have one last
game to look forward to against AFC
Portchester in the Wyvern Challenge Cup
final on Thursday, April 26 at Gosport
Borough FC (7.45).

Non-league Football

Town boss lauds his ten heroes

BASINGSTOKE Town manager Jason Bristow praised his side's team spirit after they kept their play-off destiny in their own hands by winning against the odds at Havant & Waterlooville on Monday.

Delano Sam-Yorke's emphatic strike put Town ahead midway through the first half, but the game looked to have turned against them when defender Ross Adams was sent off just before the break for a second yellow card.

However, the visitors defended brilliantly to keep relegation-threatened Havant at bay, claiming a vital 1-0 win that left them just two points outside the Blue Square Bet South play-off places with a game in hand on the sides above them.

Speaking after the game,



WINNING GOAL: Delano Sam-Yorke.

Bristow said: "I had a squad of heroes tonight. The team spirit we have got at the moment is second to none. "They battled hard for each other and put their bodies on the

line. It was all about the players playing together and we really showed what sort of team we are."

The final whistle sparked scenes of wild celebration by players and fans alike.

"When you are playing with ten men for 45 minutes, it is going to be a great relief if you can win, and it means a lot to us," Bristow added. "It has meant a lot to the players all season, but we have got some belief back and are in a fantastic position now."

"That was the best win and performance of the season considering the manner of the result."

Bristow's mood was in stark contrast to that of Havant caretaker boss Steve Johnson whose side's fate was left hanging in the balance, fourth-to-bottom of the table.

"It was all about missed chances because we created enough chances to win three or four football matches," he said. "But we lacked a bit of composure and quality in front of goal."

STOP BENNETT POOLE WARNED

TIVERTON boss Mark Saunders is tipping Poole Town to gain back-to-back promotions – providing they can silence Gosport Borough goal machine Justin Bennett.

Saunders, who made more than 250 Football League appearances, was on the receiving end as the Dolphins secured their Southern One South & West play-off place with a 1-0 victory last Saturday, *writes Neil Perrett.*

Scott Joyce's first-half goal at Tivvy's Ladysmead earned Poole a tenth win in 12, guaranteeing them a top-five place along with south coast rivals Gosport and Sholing.

And former Plymouth and Gillingham midfielder Saunders is convinced the battle for a place in the Premier Division will be a two-horse race between Tom Killick's Poole and Alex Pike's Gosport.

"Poole and Gosport are the two best teams we have played," he said. "If Poole were to meet Gosport and they could keep Bennett quiet, my money would be on them."

"They came out of the blocks really quickly against us and played with a high tempo. For the first 20 minutes I thought it was going to be a cricket score, but our goalkeeper kept us in it."

"Poole are a big threat going forward and are big, strong and well organised."

"They are more than capable of winning the play-offs and have done really well to get there considering they only came up this season."

"We thumped Gosport 4-2 and it could have been six or seven."

"Their main threat is Justin

Bennett because he scores lots of goals."

"Gosport and Poole are both strong outfits, but Poole are a good all-round team. I was disappointed we didn't test their goalkeeper at all and we played into the hands of their big lumps."

Joyce netted the only goal after 22 minutes – a lead the visitors defended to record their 13th clean sheet in their past 27 league games.

"We are delighted to have clinched a place in the play-offs and the players deserve a lot of praise," said manager Killick.

"Not many clubs come into a new league and challenge at the top end in their first season."

"We could still end up finishing second and that would be a big achievement."

"It is not just about the players though, it is also about the people behind the scenes who constantly try to drive the club forward."

"It has been a good effort to get this far, but we are aware it will mean nothing if we don't win the play-offs."

The play-off semi-finals will take place during the week commencing Monday, April 30 with second and third-placed teams gaining home advantage.

The highest-placed finisher will stage the final, scheduled for Monday, May 7.

"I am not bothered who we play, but I am bothered about being at home," said Killick.

"I feel we would get a really big crowd for a home match and that would give us an advantage over whoever we play."

DANGER MAN:

Poole Town goal ace Scott Joyce.



DANGER MAN: Gosport's ace striker Justin Bennett.

Wimborne win overshadowed by Kemble injury

AN injury to leading marksman Matt Kemble overshadowed Wimborne Town's 1-0 victory over Southern One South & West rivals Mangotsfield last Saturday.

The striker fell awkwardly midway through the second half and X-rays at Poole Hospital revealed he had torn ligaments in his shoulder, ruling him out for the season.

The Magpies ended a three-

match winless run when Jamie Davidson settled the issue with a stunning volley after five minutes.

Wimborne boss Steve Cuss admitted: "Although we were delighted with the result and it was a good performance, the game was marred for us by Matt's injury as he was in a lot of pain."

"He has been terrific for us. He stepped up from the Wessex

League and has scored 18 goals, which is a fair return for him."

"His performances have been good and he has established himself at Southern League level."

"Everybody is so disappointed his season has ended in this way."

"It is important he gets the right rehabilitation during the summer and gets himself back and ready for the start of next season."

An inspired display from Mangotsfield goalkeeper Chris Astley stood between Wimborne and a more convincing victory, although the hosts were forced to endure a nervous finale.

But Cuss said: "We were pleased. We got ourselves in front early and gave ourselves something to hang onto. We played well at both ends of the pitch."

TODAY'S NON-LEAGUE ACTION – SEE PAGE 21

Non-league Football

Wendy Gee

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NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

BRAZILIAN Carlos Geteski has received the royal seal of approval from Lymington Town manager Andy Leader.

Such has been the influence of the globe-trotting midfielder that he has been crowned 'King Carlos' by the Southampton Road boss.

Having steadied the Lymington ship following the mid-season departure of the Hussey brothers, Leader has transformed Town into one of the form sides of the Sydenhams Premier.

Last Saturday's 3-2 humbling of GE Hamble was their fifth league win on the spin, following victories over Blackfield & Langley, Totton & Eling, New Milton and Fawley.

And it was 'King Carlos' who applied the finishing touch after Danny Cox and Joe Maxwell had wiped out Jamie Musselwhite's Hamble opener.

The 32-year-old Brazilian – full name Carlos Alberto Geteski – first appeared on the local scene as a trialist with Eastleigh at the start of the season having returned to England following a spell playing for Omonoia Aradippou in the Cypriot second division.

During the past 14 years he has played all over the world, moving on from second level Brazilian side Sociedade Esportiva, Recreativa e Cultural Guarani to stints in Malaysia, Greece and Sweden.

He arrived in England in the summer of 2008 to trial with Barnet and later cropped up with Combined Counties outfit Colliers Wood and Southern Leaguers Bridgwater Town whom he left to play in Cyprus.

On leaving Eastleigh last October, Geteski signed for their Blue Square Bet South rivals Havant & Waterlooville. From there he penned dual registration forms for Southern Premier outfit Bashley, joining fellow midfielder Chris Onoufriou on the New Forest club's books.

It was Onoufriou, now Lymington's inspirational club captain, who introduced him to Leader.

"Carlos is staying with Chrissy, so he just fell into our laps really," said the Town boss.

"He's played professional football abroad,

Carlos is 'king' of Lymington

so he's well above our level. The boy can play!

"He's a central midfielder and his attitude is ten out of ten. He's a top pro.

"Bashley wanted him back – he showed me a text they'd sent him – but he made a commitment to us and wanted to keep to it.

"He's enjoying his football here – just like they all are."

With just a handful of exceptions, such as Town stalwart Darren Ritchie and goalkeeper Stuart Williamson, Leader's new-look side are unrecognisable from the Lymington of old.

Dual-signed AFC Totton youngster Adam Tomasso, pictured left, and Waterside lad Albert 'Ed' Stacey provide options at right-back, while for-

mer Sholing reserves man Alex Blake is putting what Leader calls his "happy feet" to good use in midfield.

Up front Danny Cox – formerly of AFC Totton, Sholing and Winchester City – is building a promising partnership with ex-Eastleigh and Winchester man Joe Maxwell.

"Joe took a few weeks to settle, but he's doing well now playing up front with Danny," said Leader.

"Danny's fitness levels are much improved. He's got a bit too much to say sometimes, but he's a winner and I like that. He's a very bubbly, lively character and he's been magnificent over the last month."

At the back Dan Fox, Lymington's top scorer last season, has filled in admirably at centre-half, partnering the outstanding James Davis.

"We signed James from Alresford and he's been immense," said Leader. "He played for me as a 16-year-old for Winchester in the Southern League, so I knew what I was getting.

"Left-back is James's best position, but we've played him at centre-half and he's been rock solid."

Carry on Leader

ANDY Leader looks set to stay on as manager of Lymington Town next season.

Initial talks have gone well and the former BAT, Winchester City and Andover boss seems keen to continue the good work achieved since he took over the reins in mid-December.

Although previous managers Stuart and Matt Hussey left the club comfortably positioned in mid-table, the bulk of the team departed and Leader, pictured, had to call on his wealth of footballing contacts to hastily revamp the squad.

Results suffered initially, but last Saturday's 3-2 home success over GE Hamble was Town's fifth Sydenhams Premier win on the spin – form they will be looking to carry into 2012/13.

"We've assembled a competitive squad and laid the foundations for next season," said Leader.

"With the best team (champions Winchester City) going out of the league, the opportunity's there for anyone who can get themselves well organised.

"I've sat down for a chat with the chairman and vice-chairman and told them where I think we need to go and, in that first meeting, we were singing off the same hymn sheet.

"Lymington have got a lot going for them.

"I know there are issues about ground-sharing with

cricket, but the pitch is fantastic and it's a very friendly club.

"We're just looking for a few more to join the committee and we need a new secretary because Russell Young is stepping down with work commitments.

"I'm realistic enough to know that we're not going to have a grand a week playing budget, but then look at Christchurch. They don't pay, allegedly, and I've no reason to disbelieve Kempy (manager Graham Kemp) when he says that. "But they've produced a conveyor belt of young talent and haven't needed to pay.

"Nine times out of ten players want money, but it can be done without it."

Having managed at Southern League level with Winchester, Andover and Fleet, dropping back into the Wessex League wasn't top of Leader's wish list when the Lymington vacancy came up.

But Leader, a resident of nearby Hordle, has warmed to the task and said: "I'm enjoying it here.

"I still advocate that everyone should play and manage at the highest level they can. 'Have boots, will travel' has always been my motto and I proved that when I travelled from Bracknell to play down here and have done long trips the other way.

"But, saying that, I love my football and this is my home town club."



Local and national football fixtures for the week ahead

Monday, April 23

npower FOOTBALL LEAGUE
Championship: Leicester v West Ham.
MAGNATA CARE HAMPSHIRE LEAGUE
2004

Fair Oak v Mottisfont (6.00).

WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

Premier Division: Eastleigh v Bashley, Gosport Borough v Poole Town.

Tuesday, April 24

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Semi-final second leg: Barcelona v Chelsea.

BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

Aston Villa v Bolton.

BLUE SQUARE BET CONFERENCE

Premier: Gateshead v Luton, Newport County v Wrexham.

EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE

South: Hampton & Richmond v Basingstoke.

EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Division One South & West: Yate v Tiverton.

RUSSEL COTES CUP FINAL

Christchurch v Bemerton HH (at Christchurch FC).

PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE

Senior Division (6.30 kick-offs): AFC Stoneham v Bournemouth Sports, Hamble

Club v Hedge End Rangers, Liphook Utd v Golden Common, QK Southampton v University of Portsmouth, Sporting BW v Looe Heath.

Wednesday, April 25

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Semi-final second leg: Real Madrid v Bayern Munich.

EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Premier Division: Frome v Oxford City.

SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE

Premier Division: GE Hamble v Bournemouth Poppies.

PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE

Combination Division: Liss Athletic v Paulsgrove (6.30).

WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

Premier Division: Bemerton HH v Wimborne, Dorchester v Gosport Borough.

PORTSMOUTH SENIOR CUP FINAL

Moneyfields v US Portsmouth (at Portsmouth FC, 7.30).

Thursday, April 26

UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE

Semi-final second leg: Athletic Bilbao v

Sporting, Valencia v Atletico Madrid.

UNDER-18 INTERNATIONAL

England U18 v Rep of Ireland U18.

PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE

Senior Division: Paulsgrove v University of Portsmouth (6.30).

WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

Wynern Challenge Cup final: AFC Portchester v Sholing (at Gosport Borough FC, 7.45).

Saturday, April 28

(All FL games 3pm ko unless stated otherwise)

BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

Everton v Fulham, Norwich v Liverpool (5.30), Stoke v Arsenal, Sunderland v Bolton,

Swansea v Wolverhampton, West Brom v Aston Villa, Wigan v Newcastle.

npower FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Championship (all matches 12.30pm ko): Barnsley v Brighton, Birmingham v Reading,

Burnley v Bristol City, Crystal Palace v Cardiff, Derby v Peterborough, Doncaster v Ipswich,

Leeds v Leicester, Millwall v Blackpool, Nottm Forest v Portsmouth, SAINTS v Coventry,

Watford v Middlesbrough, West Ham v Hull.

League One: Brentford v Sheff Wed, Bury v Oldham, Carlisle v Exeter, Colchester v

Tranmere, Hartlepool v Leyton Orient, Preston v Charlton, Rochdale v Milton Keynes Dons, Scunthorpe v Bournemouth, Sheff Utd v Stevenage (5.20), Walsall v Huddersfield,

Wycombe v Notts County, Yeovil v Chesterfield.

League Two: Aldershot v Rotherham, Barnet v AFC Wimbledon, Bristol Rovers v Accrington

Stanley, Cheltenham v Bradford, Crawley Town v Hereford, Macclesfield v Burton Albion,

Morecambe v Plymouth, Northampton v Gillingham, Oxford Utd v Southend,

Shrewsbury v Dag & Red, Swindon v Port Vale, Torquay v Crewe.

BLUE SQUARE BET CONFERENCE

Premier (all 1pm ko): Alfreton Town v Bath City, Barrow v Newport County, Darlington v

Kettering, Ebbsfleet United v Lincoln City.

Fleetwood Town v Luton, Gateshead v AFC Telford, Grimsby v Southport, Hayes & Yeading

v Stockport, Kidderminster v Mansfield,

Tamworth v Cambridge Utd, Wrexham v Braintree Town, York v Forest Green.

South: Boreham Wood v Tonbridge Angels, Chelmsford v Woking, Dorchester v Bromley,

Eastbourne Borough v Salisbury City, Havant & Waterlooville v Staines, Maidenhead v

Eastleigh, Sutton v Farnborough, Thurrock v

Hampton & Richmond, Truro v Dartford, Welling v Basingstoke, Weston-super-Mare v Dover.

EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Premier Division: AFC Totton v Bedford, Barwell v Evesham, Bashley v Hemel

Hempstead, Brackley v St Albans, Cambridge City v Swindon Supermarine, Chippenham v

Arlesey, Cirencester v Banbury, Frome v Stourbridge, Hitchin v Oxford City, Leamington

v Chesham, Redditch v Weymouth.

Division One South & West: Bridgwater v

Didcot, Clevedon v Cinderford, Gosport Borough v Bishops Cleeve,

Halesowen v Taunton, Hungerford v North Leigh, Poole Town v Bideford, Stourport Swifts

v Mangotsfield, Thatcham v Wimbome, Tiverton v Abingdon Utd, Yate v Sholing.

SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE

Premier Division: Alton v Romsey, Blackfield & Langley v Bemerton HH, Brading v

Hamworthy Utd, Christchurch v Alresford,

Downton v Lymington, Fareham v Winchester City, GE Hamble v Totton & Eling, Hayling Utd

v New Milton, Laverstock & Ford v Bournemouth Poppies, Moneyfields v Fawley,

Newport IoW v Horndean.

Division One: AFC Portchester v Andover NS,

Amesbury v Whitchurch, Brockenhurst v US Portsmouth, Cowes Sports v Pewsey Vale,

East Cowes Vics v Warrminster, Fleet Spurs v Team Solent, Hythe & Diden v Ringwood,

Petersfield v Verwood, Stockbridge v Tadley Calvea.

PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE

Senior Division: Fleetlands v Colden Common, Liss Athletic v Sporting BW,

Otterbourne v Hedge End Rangers, Paulsgrove v Bournemouth Sports, QK Southampton v

AFC Stoneham, University of Portsmouth v Liphook.

Combination: Liphook v Hamble Club, Overton v Sporting BW.

MAGNATA CARE HAMPSHIRE LEAGUE

2004

Crusaders v Upham, Horndean Utd v Michelmersh & Timsbury, Andover Lions v

Portsmouth RNL.

WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE

Premier Division: Wimborne v Eastleigh.

Division One West: Lymington Town v Laverstock & Ford, Romsey v East Cowes

Vics, Totton & Eling v Ringwood.

Division One East: Tadley Calvea v Alresford, Whitchurch v Hayling Utd.

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Non-league Football

Woolner is the Portcastrian ace

■ HAYWARD SATURDAY LEAGUE

ROBBIE Woolner fired in a late equaliser to earn PREMIER DIVISION leaders Portcastrian a 2-2 draw with Hamworthy Recreation.

Woolner had given Ports an early lead but the Hammers came back after the break through Luke Dawe and Tim Porter. Portcastrian are a point ahead of championship rivals Bournemouth Manor with two games to go but, with their game at Parley Sports called off due to a waterlogged pitch, Manor have a game in hand.

Bosuns Chair were denied victory when new signing Omar Jartu's last minute equaliser earned Bournemouth Electric a 4-4 draw. Careless defending by Electric at the start of the second half had enabled Bosuns to lead 4-2 with goals from Dan Cooper (2), Scott Metcalf and Neil Ashall. The Sparkies salvaged a point though to finish ahead of arch rivals Westover Bournemouth. Jolyan May (2) and Mike Wynne were the other Electric scorers.

Sway also let points slip after being in a commanding position. They were 4-1 ahead early in the second half against Westover Bournemouth thanks to Steve Hillyer, Gareth Barnes, Ben Thomson and Danny Veal but ten man Westover fought back through Ed Ewens (2), Clive Stopper, Dale Walters and Alistair Paton to shade it 5-4.

Mike Kitson bagged a hat-trick for DIVISION ONE champions Mudeford Men's Club in their last game of the season and Toby Sherriff added a brace but there appears to have been a problem or two with the defending when runners up FC Bournemouth emerged 10-5 winners. Paul Conroy and Wes Jones rattled in four each for the visitors with Craig Levertson and Luke McCoy also on target.

Jimmy Rowley bagged a hat-trick when Harrington United finished in third place after their 6-1 drubbing of Alderholt.

Paul Wilkinson, Ben Walton and Ben Mowlam were the other United marksmen with Nathan Welch scoring Alderholt's

consolation goal.

Steve Newman netted for South Coast Demolition but DIVISION TWO champions Richmond Park Con swept them aside 4-1 in their penultimate game of the season thanks to Mark Pudney (2), Bradley Parnell and Mike Barber.

James Totczyk struck twice in Sway Reserves' 7-0 hammering of Westover Bournemouth Reserves with the other goals coming from Will Kitcher, George Briggs, Andrew Saxon, Alex Davis, and James Goodwin while Fordingbridge Turks got the better of bottom placed Seyward Windows 5-2 in the basement battle. Jason Thorne (2), Luke King, Anthony Roberts, and Jamie Collier were the Fordingbridge scorers with Jack O'Hara and Karl Budden replying for Seyward.

Adrian Pavey's hat-trick proved decisive in DIVISION THREE champions Bournemouth Electric A's 5-2 success at AFC Burton. Matt Wallace and Matty lngs were the other Electric scorers with Matt Cook and Ben Pantling replying for Burton.

Winton Borough netted through Adam Alkaysi, Scott Ramsier, and Toby Smillie but Redhill Rangers struck twice in the last three minutes through Craig Wells and Pete Valinskis to just get the better of them 4-3. It was Valinskis's second goal of the game for Redhill whose other goal came via Joe Moore.

Mike Thompson let rip with a four goal blast for Queens Park Athletic Reserves but BU Staff had the edge 5-4 thanks to Tom Symons, Tom Eastwood, Martin Squires, Ricky Barton, and Ben Cooper and require a seven-point haul from their four remaining games to wrest the DIVISION FOUR title from the grasp of AFC Pennington.

New Milton Eagles move up to fourth place on goal difference after Garry Chancellor (2), Chris Payne, and Ollie Luchoomun ensured a 4-1 victory over Burley who replied through Mark Reeves.

■ HAYWARD SUNDAY LEAGUE

SACHA Navarro hit AFC Burton Reserves for six and there were hat-tricks from both Luke McArdle and Mark Carrigan when Kings Arms Wallisdown celebrated their DIVISION SIX title success by trouncing the tailenders 12-3. Ryan Attree (2) and Mike Hancock were the Burton marksmen.

In the other Division Six game, Adam Neesam scored from the penalty spot for third placed Ace but Wimborne Magpies upended them 3-1 courtesy of a Gary Jones hat-trick.

Tavla Spor were on the receiving end again in DIVISION ONE when third placed Parley Sports punished them 5-0 with goals from Dave Lask, Jack Swann, Jack Jones, Matt Newbery, and Gavin Vines.

Dean Cunningham netted for DIVISION TWO runners up Creekmoor Lions who finish ahead of Lotus Press on goal difference despite losing 2-1 to them while Sam Cole and Richard Williams gave Tiegla Tiles a 2-0 success against Redhill.

Steve Miles struck for DIVISION THREE runners up Queens Park Rovers Reserves but Ferndown Locomotive can finish in third place after Danny Moore earned them a 1-1 draw.

Unbeaten Barton Wanderers move up to second place in DIVISION FOUR, a point adrift of leaders Specialist Lettings, after Ollie Luchoomun, Brett Woods, Dene Gilbert, Shaun Waterman, and Billy Hancock gave the M.A.Hart Lawrence A Brivati Cup winners the edge 5-4 against promotion rivals Shoulder of Mutton Reserves. Luke Wadey (2), Luke Scrimshaw, and Marc Scrimshaw were the Shoulder of Mutton marksmen.

Charles Stratton bagged a hat-trick for White Heather Hornets and Chris Baldry added another but it was not quite enough to save them from a 5-4 defeat against Newtown Rovers who finished just one point adrift of DIVISION SEVEN runners up Ensburry Park Rangers. Adam Janes (2), Josh Harper, Andy Smith, and Martin Frigot scored for Newtown whose recent run of four defeats from six outings scuppered their title hopes.

M.A.Hart Nicholas Read Cup winners Bournemouth Borough marked their DIVISION EIGHT championship success by romping home 6-0 winners against Horse & Jockey thanks to Dan Bailey's hat-trick and further goals from Ben Cooper (2) and Michael Bailey.

Kinson Con have their sights on a third place finish after Peter Wyeth and Jason Thomas gave them the verdict 2-1 against AFC Bransgore who replied through Alex Martin.

Chris Wingfield was the four goal star when Ferndown Forest poleaxed ECP 8-2 with Ben Traves, Scott Ramsier, Marcus Drewett, and Nathan Bartlett also on target. Andrew Pittwood and Robert Harman were the ECP scorers.

Throop United completed their DIVISION NINE campaign four points clear at the top after Mitch Barnes, Gavin Horwood, and Martin Hall ensured a vital 3-1 success against championship rivals Alderholt. Matt Cole scored for Alderholt who have the games in hand to catch Throop, as have Scott V.

Gavin Lawrenson scored both goals when Kings Arms Athletic just got the better of West Mullen 2-1 with Jamie Robinson replying for the visitors.

Shane Barney was the five goal hero when A & T Athletic gave fellow strugglers Tower Park a 5-1 thumping, Mark Adey scored Park's consolation goal.

● Branksome Railway and Shoulder of Mutton go head to head in tonight's Mark



TWO-GOAL HERO: Portcastrians' Robbie Woolner (white) netted twice in 2-2 draw with Hamworthy Rec.

KING'S ARMS' IS SACHA GOOD PERFORMANCE

Hart Sunday Senior Cup Final at Hurn Bridge (kick off 7:30pm) and they will meet again in the final of the M.A.HART ROB-BINS CUP on Thursday 26th April after they came through their respective semi finals unscathed.

Dan Manuel put Railway in front from the penalty spot against Bournemouth Electric and Dan Blackburn doubled their lead when he powered home a far post header just before the break. Electric's fate was sealed when Sam Purdy added a third at the start of the second half and, with Manuel adding two more to complete his hat-trick and Keith Whatling also getting on the score sheet, Railway emerged convincing 6-1 winners. Sam Adams scored Electric's consolation goal with a shot that took a deflection off a defender.

Unbeaten Shoulder of Mutton were paired with New Star United in the other semi final and goals from Lee Wilkins, Jamie Moores, and Richie Sands ensured a 3-0 victory for the unbeaten Division One title favourites.



FULL STRETCH: Ports' Harrison Clements is closed down by Rec's Sean Griffiths.

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Non-league Football

ENERGY BOUNCE BACK

SOUTHAMPTON Energy made amends for their Trophy Final defeat by inflicting a 7-4 defeat on their Cup final opponents Veracity Vipers with Richie Bampton scoring four, one more than team mate Nick Kellaway.

Park Sports were 2-0 victors at AFC Grains thanks to Roman Williams and Josh Reece-Long and are well set for promotion to Senior Leagues, writes **ROD SUTHERLAND**.

Favourites Wombles need to glean four points from the six available and faced Park on Wednesday with Braishfield the visitors on Saturday. Should they drop points the mantle could fall to South City who must rack up the goals against prop squad Otterbourne A.

The Junior 2 title race is now firmly in Hedge End Rangers Res' grip after they defeated third placed Langley Manor 4-2 with Matty Hawkes scoring twice. They need victory in their last game against Innar to leapfrog long term leaders Q K Soton A. Innar fell 3-0 at fellow strugglers Wellow who won for only the third time this season through Ash McGimpsey, Jonathan Page and an own goal.

The Junior 3 title race is the most complicated but is now down to the final three hopefuls. Chandler's Ford Rangers finished their fixtures with a 4-0 verdict over long term leaders Compton Res. Jamie Nash struck three against Compton who cannot now take the title but



TEAM PHOTO AFC STATION: Back row (from left): Gregory Hitchens, Gavin Thomson, Chris Eager, Ben Bowers, Michael Hogg, Steve Pendrey (captain), Harry Ward, Michael King. Front: Jamie Moss (player-manager), Ross Urquhart, Bobby Fox, Richard Ossai, Gareth Harris, Adam Curnow, Dan Buck.

■ DREW SMITH LEAGUE: JUNIOR DIVISIONS

can still have a say as they have to face Riverside, who can still win the title but must win all three matches vs Infinity Res, Compton and Forest Town Res, the other team who could win the title – but only by defeating Riverside.

Forest kept in touch with a 6-2 defeat of Cricketers Eastleigh with Sean Parker hitting three. Dan Phillips of Riverside was also a hat-trick hero as his team

thumped Capital 5-0. Wellington beat Infinity 2-0 but will have to focus on their Hants A Cup final against Hook on April 28 at Winklebury if they are to achieve glory this season.

The Junior 4 title is also still up for grabs after favourites AFC Gulf Western failed to win for the second game in a row after going down 1-0 to new leaders West Totton. Harefield are also in the mix with a

match against AFC Gulf which could end up deciding the title or could hand it to West Totton depending on the outcome.

Botley Village Res were 4-2 winners against Cricketers Fair Oak who take the wooden spoon as a result.

Bitterne Park Hotel took the Junior 5 title after a 6-2 win at Upham Res. It was just as well as second placed Stanton also won 5-2 at Freemantle with James Williams grabbing a brace.

The Junior 6 interest is

now at the bottom end. Mechanics lost 1-7 to AFC Station whose Mike Hogg hit three. Mich & Tims A were, having recovered from a 3-0 deficit to level at 3-3, then went 4-3 down before the match had to be abandoned as the M&T sub fell awkwardly in a tackle and broke his leg.

Sporting Wessex secured fourth spot and will hope to sneak a promotion position after defeating third placed Coxford Jets 3-2, Aaron Lavers netting all three.

League's ventures

The Southampton Sat FL are undertaking two significant new ventures from next season.

In the Veterans League, there will be one division of over 40's and two or three divisions of over 35's. Each over 40 team will can use two or three over 35's. The idea is to allow players who have been playing Vets for some time and wish to carry on but can't keep pace with 35 year old whipper-snappers.

The league will be providing football for ladies who wish to play occasion matches e.g. once a month at one venue probably Riverside Park. The venture was put forward by Sophie Davies of Hampshire FA who may even enter a team of her own. It is seen as a stepping stone for those not wishing to travel County wide but have no other alternative once they progress past youth level – well catered for on Saturdays by the popular New Forest League.

The League have been contacted by a number of potential new teams and will be holding an evening meeting soon to ensure all teams realise the commitment that running a football team entails and have sound financial backing as that is often a shortfall with new clubs. Pitch fees are mostly minimum £40 but some over £60 whilst, for referees, you should allow up to about £25 to include match fee and expenses. Throw in the cleaning bill and occasional lost balls each home match will cost the home team in the region of £100. Fees are in the region of £150. Anyone wishing to enter a team in the Drew Smith Group Southampton Saturday FL please contact Rod Sutherland on 02380 864828 (ansa phone) or rcsutherland@suptanet.com and I will ensure you are invited to the meeting.

Draw is good enough

SENIOR DIVISIONS: Netley CS secured their Senior 1 title thanks to a 0-0 draw with main rivals Cadnam United.

Netley had the better of the early exchanges with the Cadnam keeper the busier but despite much endeavour and exuberance from both teams neither could breakthrough.

Both will be eligible for promotion to next seasons Premier division which will be stronger for their involvement.

Thornhill remain on track for third place after a 7-2 mauling of Mich & Tims with Billy Couzens leading the way with a treble.

Lyndhurst sit fourth following a 6-0 demolition of BTC Soton Res including a hat-trick from Wade Wilson. Durley Res moved further clear with a 3-1 win at Burrigade AFC Alex White with a brace.

The last Premier division match of the season ended with second placed Comrades grabbing a 1-0 win against London Airways courtesy of Jamie Wilson.

VETERANS DIVISIONS: Just one A division

match played due to the expectation that teams would not want to play on the Saturday following the Thursday night SFA Cup final which was postponed due to the thunder storm.

Unfortunately this was postponed again on Tuesday night so the opportunity was lost. Des Edwards struck twice to help GE Aviation secure a 3-2 win over Colden Common.

The B Division title race is so open that incredibly six teams can still win the title with just two weeks to go.

Current leaders are Locks Heath who were held two each by RS Winchester who had to play the last 80 minutes with just 9 men.

Hedge End Rangers lost ground surprisingly beaten 1-3 by AFC Stoneham whose Paul Chandler hit two.

More shocks as Northend won 2-1 at Hythe Aztecs. Phil Swainston scored both, one from the spot, as Langley Tavern edged Wildern 2-1. Langley Manor were beaten 2-1 by Compton.

The last game of the Vets C season with Baddesley Park ensuring third spot with a 2-0 win at Sholing B.

DREW SMITH GROUP SOUTHAMPTON FL (including Saturday 14/04/12)

SENIOR PREMIER										
	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS			
Bush Hill	18	17	0	1	69	21	51			
Comrades	18	12	2	4	45	31	38			
Forest Town	18	11	1	6	50	33	34			
Nursling	18	10	3	5	37	27	33			
Southampton Uni	18	10	2	6	38	21	32			
AFC Hittingbury	18	8	2	8	49	45	26			
Cuthurst Athletic	18	5	3	10	33	67	18			
London Airways	18	4	1	13	26	49	13			
Bishopstoke WMC	18	3	3	12	31	46	12			
BTC Soton	18	1	1	16	16	54	4			
SENIOR 1										
Netley CS Res	22	19	3	0	85	11	60			
Cadnam United	19	15	3	1	90	22	48			
Thornhill H K	19	13	3	3	77	36	42			
Lyndhurst	20	13	2	5	60	28	41			
White Horse NM	21	11	1	9	65	46	34			
Hythe Aztecs	20	10	2	8	62	57	32			
Hedge End Town	21	8	3	10	55	66	27			
Durley Res	22	7	1	14	45	90	22			
Burrigade AFC	20	5	3	12	45	50	18			
Comrades Res	21	4	4	13	35	64	16			
BTC Soton Res	21	4	2	15	22	73	14			
Michelmersht & T Res	22	1	1	20	21	119	4			
JUNIOR 1										
South City United	17	10	3	4	43	28	33			
Wombles	16	9	6	1	36	21	33			
Southampton Energy	17	9	5	3	66	45	32			
Park Sports	17	9	3	5	49	31	30			
AFC Grains	18	7	5	6	38	29	26			
Veracity Vipers	17	7	3	7	46	40	24			
Compton	18	6	4	8	46	51	22			
East Boldre	17	6	3	8	37	41	21			
Braishfield	16	5	2	9	24	31	17			
Otterbourne A	17	0	0	17	11	79	0			
JUNIOR 2										
QK Southampton A	16	12	1	3	46	16	37			
Hedge End Rang Res	15	11	2	2	34	11	35			
Langley Manor	16	8	3	5	46	22	27			
Solent Saints	16	7	2	7	37	40	23			
Questmap	16	6	3	7	40	40	21			
Chamberlayne Ath	16	6	2	8	29	36	20			
Hamble United	16	5	4	7	27	32	19			
Innar	15	4	1	10	23	42	13			
Wellow	16	3	0	13	24	67	9			
JUNIOR 3										
Chandlers Fd Rang	20	14	2	4	79	34	44			
Forest Town Res	19	12	6	1	59	30	42			
Compton Res	19	11	4	4	47	30	37			
Riverside	17	10	5	2	54	16	35			
FC Wellington	19	11	2	6	47	31	35			
Infinity Res	18	7	5	6	43	50	26			
AFC Gordons	20	5	1	14	32	65	16			
Bricklayers AFC	20	4	2	12	26	61	13			
Capital	20	4	1	15	32	65	13			
Warsash Wasps*	20	7	5	8	40	63	12			
Cricketers Eastgh	20	3	1	16	23	67	10			
JUNIOR 4										
West Totton	18	15	1	2	72	25	46			
Harefield	17	14	2	1	85	16	44			
AFC Gulf Western	17	12	2	1	53	17	38			
Chandlers Ford	18	9	4	5	50	36	31			
Botley Village Res	18	8	2	8	44	54	26			
Good Companions	18	5	2	11	39	50	17			
Brigadier Gerard	18	5	1	12	31	58	16			
Priory Rovers	18	4	1	13	27	57	13			
New Forest	17	3	4	10	21	57	13			
Cricketer Fair Oak	17	2	1	14	24	76	7			
JUNIOR 5										
Bitterne PK Hotel*	18	13	2	3	69	28	38			
Stanton FC*	18	13	1	4	70	40	37			
Botley Village A	18	12	1	5	62	38	37			
Horton Heath	18	11	3	4	61	37	36			
Uplam Res	18	9	0	9	60	47	27			
Athletico Romey	18	6	4	8	40	37	22			
Freemantle AFC	18	6	4	8	46	55	22			
Hamble United Res	18	5	5	8	28	50	20			
London Airways Res	18	2	1	15	21	70	7			
Riverside Res	18	1	3	14	20	75	6			
JUNIOR 6										
New Forest Res	19	17	1	1	88	27	52			
S O Sports	20	16	1	3	83	38	49			
Coxford Jets	19	12	1	6	54	44	37			
Sporting Wessex	20	11	2	7	50	36	35			
Burrigade Village	20	10	2	8	56	38	32			
Amphill Athletic	19	9	4	6	58	45	31			
AFC Station	18	6	3	9	32	62	21			
Braishfield Res	20	6	3	11	51	62	21			
AFC Soton	20	2	13	5	40	17	17			
Michelmersht & T A	20	2	2	16	25	102	8			
Mechanics	19	2	1	16	37	80	7			
VETERANS A										
Questmap Vets	17	14	1	2	60	19	43			
Nursling Vets	16	14	1	1	47	12	43			
Sporting BTC A	15	12	2	1	39	11	38			
Sholing A	16	9	1	6	40	27	28			
G E Aviation A	18	7	2	9	38	35	23			
Redlynch & W Utd	18	6	3	9	30	48	21			
QK Southampton	18	6	2	10	32	34	20			
BTC Soton Vets	18	4	1	13	24	48	13			
Colden Common	16	4	0	12	28	39	12			
Old Tauntonians	18	2	1	15	19	84	7			
VETERANS B										
Locks Heath	21	13	3	5	52	21	42			
Bishops Waltham Dym	21	11	7	3	64	41	40			
Langley Tavern A	20	11	6	3	63	28	39			
Hedge End Rangers	19	11	3	5	49	40	36			
RS Winchester	18	11	2	5	42	25	35			
Hythe Aztecs	18	10	2	6	49	38	32			
Compton Vets	21	7	7	7	35	41	28			
Langley Manor A	19	6	2	11	37	39	20			
Northend United	22	5	5	12	30	57	20			
AFC Stoneham	20	5	2	13	31	54	17			
Albion Sports	21	4	2	15	15	52	14			
Wildern O B	20	1	9	10	33	64	12			
VETERANS C										
Sporting BTC B	20	16	1	3	66	17	49			
GE Aviation B	20	16	1	3	66	21	49			
Badeslade Park	20	13	2	5	57	32	41			
Michelmersht & T	20	13	1	6	50	34	40			
Sholing B	20	11	2	7	43	26	35			
Hythe Aztecs	20	8	2	10	47	47	25			
Winchester O B	20	8	1	11	26	32	25			
Langley Tavern B	20	4	6	10	43	64	18			
Redbridge O B	20	5	2	13	41	73	17			
Priory Rovers	20	3	3	16	21	63	10			
Langley Manor B	20	1	5	14	26	63	10			

■ SUNDAY FOOTBALL

Brookhill hit six to win cup

BROOKHILL Saints Reserves claimed the SFA Junior 'A' Cup with a 6-2 win over Roll Call.

The Junior Division 2 side went into the match in buoyant mood following their midweek 7-0 league thrashing of Itchen Manor with a Sean Haines' hat-trick added to by James Lavender (2), Perry Harding and Jody Agrella. Haines and Lavender were again among the goals in the final, scoring twice each – with Ashley Goodman also netting a brace.

Mould Tools edged out Sporting View 1-0 to win the JD Fives Hampshire FA Junior 'C' Cup.

In City of Southampton league action, KRL ended their season on a high, beating Totton Cosmos 5-3 away with goals from Craig Swain (2), Matt Grey (2) and Ricky Gorman. Lee Wilkinson (2) and Ashley Hower replied.

Winston Hotel claimed the Junior Division 1 title after a 2-2 home draw with Linden Tree. Ben Rizzo and Martin McNeil netted for the hosts with Aaron Rawlings and Phil Jackson replying for Linden, who led 2-1 at the break.

In Junior Division 2 FC Railway caned Athletico 7-3 with Sean McCarthy (3), Mark Bond (2), Daniel Hancock and Karl Reid on target. David King (2) and Martin Poore replied.

James Langer belted a triple as FC Salt defeated staged a great comeback against Sports Mania.

Mania led 3-1 at the interval through Cameron Marsh (2) and Neil Fielden, but Salt triumphed 4-3 with Ian Hockings also scoring.

Junior Division 3 leaders Bridge thrashed AFC Marchwood 8-0 with Danny Longman leading the rout with a triple. Further goals came from Wayne O'Dell (2), Rob Elder, Jamie Kemp and Harry Wheeler.

Braces from Gary Klepp, Pete Rosher and Simon Cocks helped Chartwell Green hammer visiting Cherbourg 6-1, Danny Mead replying. In Junior Division 4, Andy Catterson and Mark Hayes both struck hat-tricks as Newtown Athletic romped to a 8-3 win at Eastpoint. Russell West and James Riley also scored with Aaron Connolly (2) and Ken Hampton replying.

Harry Hunt's second half double enabled Royale Marine to beat visiting Burridge 2-0.

● Southampton & District Division 3 leaders AFC Toynbee kept their league and cup double hopes alive after they booked their place in the final of the SFA Junior 'B' cup with a 4-0 win over Bishops Blaize.

Toynbee lead Division 3 by three points despite having four games in hand due to their cup exploits. Goals from Richard Adames, David Philpot and Sam Floyd helped CS FC into the Trophyman Challenge Cup final with a 3-2 win over Kingsgate. Michael Broughton and Giles Munn replied.

Two goals from Ryan Gardiner helped C & G FC to a 3-0 Division 3 home victory over rock bottom AFC Anchor, Paul Johnston also on target. David North produced a remarkable individual display as Division 4 basement club King George pulled off a shock victory to dent Coopervision's title charge.

North netted all his side's goals in a 4-3 home victory.

Despite the fact there were seven goals in the game, there were only two scorers – Oumar Khobzi netting a consolation treble.

Lapstone also failed to move to the top of Division 4 table as they lost 5-2 at home against Halfway United.

Lapstone remain second, two points off top with two games in hand.

Youth Football

St George's cup glory



PROUD MOMENT: St Georges celebrate their cup win.

Order no:14266474

IT'S celebration time for St George's Catholic VA College.

They lifted the City of Southampton Schools FA Under-12 Cup – the Alec Perkins Trophy – with a 2-0 win over Sholing at the Queen's Keep FC Ground, Redbridge, in midweek.

After an evenly contested first half, in which both schools went close, St George's took the lead - James Bennett exquisitely tucking away a penalty after team-mate Jake Dalton had been tripped.

Sholing came under increasing pressure and although they almost scored themselves, eventually conceded a second goal when Dalton chipped the goalkeeper.

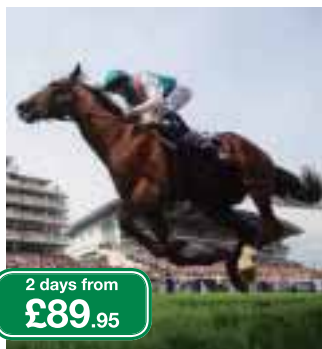
St George's twice hit the woodwork after that, Kevin Kenna being unlucky on both occasions.

St George's have an opportunity of a cup double shortly when they face Portsmouth's Priory School in the Hampshire Under-12 Cup final.



GOOD SEASON: Sholing reached the final.

Daily Echo



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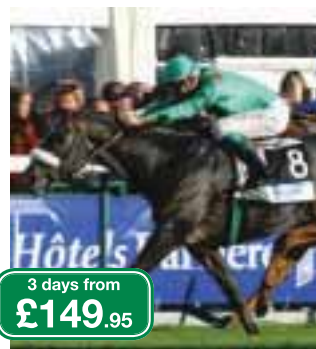
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Youth Football



Football is booming in Botley

CELEBRATION TIME: Botley Village players, officials and sponsors, above, with their title-winning under-11 squad below left. Order no: 14233726 (above) and 14233743.

FEW local football clubs have prospered as much as Botley Village in recent years.

Reforming in 2003 as Botley Barracudas, the club boasted just three youth teams.

But now, nine years on, the situation is slightly different.

For the 2012/13 campaign, the club will field five Eastleigh & District Mini Soccer teams, four Southampton Tyro League sides – the only age group the club is missing is at under-15 – a girls under-15 team, three teams in the City of Southampton Youth League, and two senior teams.

In January 2008, Botley Village achieved the Charter Standard Award, implementing all the requirements needed as per Hampshire FA Standards.

This meant all managers and coaches are at least level one qualified, with some reaching level two.

The club have also started a Saturday Soccer School in partnership with Brazilian Soccer which runs every Saturday from 10am – 11:30am. They now have 25 boys and girls aged four to seven in the school being developed to join the mini soccer teams at under 8 level.

Botley Village vice chairman Rick Roseworn explained: “We feel this is a vital part of the club.

“It gives kids the chance to be taught at an early age the basic skills and team work needed.

“We are very proud how successful this idea has been. The kids love it too.”

Botley Village have also recently received a “fantastic sponsorship deal” from local estate agents

Whitehorn & Guard.

The company, who sponsored the club's under 10 team this season, have now agreed a much bigger deal.

Former Botley player Steve White was instrumental in the sponsorship extension.

He said: “As most of the people working for Whitehorn & Guard have lived and grown up in Botley and Hedge End, we are delighted to be involved with Botley Village FC who were looking to find an official club sponsor covering all their teams.

“We hope that our commitment to sponsorship enables the club to build on previous success and give local kids the benefit of having an outstanding football club on their doorstep.”

The club are preparing to return to their original colours of green and red for next season, and thanks to the sponsorship deal all their teams next season will have the same home and away kits plus jackets.

The club's presentation day at Botley Recreation Ground takes place on May 6 (11am-4pm).

“We are glad to have a very good working relationship with the local parish council who feel the football club is very much a major part of the Botley Parish,” Roseworn added.

Highlights this season include the under 11s and under 15s winning Southampton Tyro League titles and under 16 player Sam Roberts representing Hampshire in the 125-year celebration match against Dorset at Dean Court.

Further information from Rick Roseworn on 07730 465747.



SOUTHAMPTON Tyro League under-15 Division 3 leaders for most of the season, St Francis Rangers, left, saw the title slip away from them after losing their last game of the season 2-0 to Hythe & Dibden at Hunts Farm. As a result, they finished runners-up.



HAMBLE United U12s beat Wellow 2-1 at AFC Totton in the final of the Tommy Traynor Cup. They also finished runners-up in Division 4 of the Tyro League.

Youth Football



BACK TO EARTH: Basingstoke qualified from the pool stage, but crashed 14-1 to Itchen in the quarter-finals. Pic order no:14264386

LAST FOUR:

Farnborough beaten 3-0 in the semi-finals by Itchen. Back (left-right): George Davis, Harrison Roberts, Ryan Bone, Tom Borzscz, Tom Parker-Holes. Front: Harry Darbyshire, Ross Cheek, Ryan George.

Pic order no: 14264400



THRILLER:

Barton Peveril went out 5-3 to Brockenhurst in a semi-final thriller. Back (left-right): Will Harris, Sam Phillips, Paul Redhead, Oli Pascoe, Cameron Hough. Front: Jack Odam, Callum Pragnal, Tom Ashton.

Pic order no: 14264400



ITCHEN JUST SIX-SATIONAL!

There's no halting Itchen's total domination of Hampshire Sixth Form Colleges soccer.

Already crowned league champions at all three levels and cup winners to boot, Itchen lifted the 'sixes' crown for a third successive year at the Sports Centre in midweek, *writes Mike Vimpany.*

It was the third season running they had won what is believed to be the world's oldest small-side tournament as well.

Twenty sixth form college sides from across the region played in the competition – and it's doubtful if any of them had played in worse conditions.

Playing conditions were simply horrendous once heavy rain storms had reduced the Sports Centre pitches to paddy fields.

Players waded through ankle deep mud and water – all concerns about a drought and hope pipe bans being shelved!

But Itchen marched on, leaving a trail of muddied sides in their wake.

Having won their pool, they smashed Basingstoke CoT 14-1 in the quarter-finals before seeing off Farnborough, who had sent Sparsholt packing in their last eight tie.

Ryan Lewis (2) and Adam Tomasso got the goals to secure a 3-0 win for Itchen.

Brockenhurst, whom Itchen eventually beat in the final, trimmed Peter Symonds' 3-1 at the quarter-final stage before beating Barton Peveril 5-3 in arguably the best game of the tournament.

Brockenhurst, who have a British Colleges Cup final date at Doncaster Town's Keepmoat Stadium on May 2, kept taking the lead in a pulsating semi-final.

Twice Brad Hill and on another occasion Tom



POWER SHOW: Peter Symonds' Oli Dobson runs at Brockenhurst.

Pic order no:14258669

Du Faur inched Brock ahead, but a Sam Phillips brace and a quite superb individualist equaliser from Jack Odam put BP level.

Twice at 2-2 Brockenhurst rattled the BP woodwork, but they got their just deserts in the end, with

Nathan Saxby and the hugely influential Brad Hill clinching a 5-3 win.

The only problem was that, in atrocious conditions, Brockenhurst had worn themselves out and Itchen simply strolled a one-sided final.

Brock gave it their best

shot, but Itchen played simple straight-forward football and cruised home 6-1 winners, with Zac Anderson, Matt Burke and Adam Tomasso each scoring twice.

Lewis Ross got a consolation goal late on for Brockenhurst.



BALANCE: Farnborough (red) take on Sparsholt

Pic order no: 14258707

MORE YOUTH FOOTBALL - SEE PAGES 32 & 33

Youth Football



TOP TEAM: Itchen, who carried off the Hampshire Sixth Form Colleges six-a-side tournament trophy for the third successive year. Back (left-right): Rickii Sibley, Callum Oliver, Ross Casey, Matt Burt, Andy Fricker. Front: Jordan Chalk, Ryan Lewis, Zac Anderson, Adam Tomasso.

Order no: 14264407



FINALISTS: Brockenhurst – back (left-right): Brad Morris, Lewis Ross, Kieran Burgess, Tom Du Faur Front: Brad Hill, Nathan Saxby, Harry Cooper, Adam Stride.

Order no: 14264394



WINCHESTER City Flyers under-14s came from a goal down to defeat Liss Chicks 4-1 in the North East Hants' Youth League Cup final.

Flyers peppered the Liss goal early on but were thwarted by

some excellent saves from the keeper and were caught out when Liss scrambled home the opener after a corner was not dealt with.

Winchester, despite decent chances for Francesca,

Jasmine and Millya, still trailed at the break.

But their luck changed in the second half and goals in the last 20 minutes from Camilla, Jazz, Hollie and Francesca secured an impressive victory.

Saints wrap up Un16 title

THE Saints U15/16 side travelled to The Garrison, Winchester with the prospect of securing the league title as the prize.

Winchester City Flyers sit third in the league and went in to the fixture brimming with confidence, on the back of a 7-0 victory at Pompey Uni.

Southampton Saints were looking to extend their 100 per cent league record and make it a perfect ten out of ten wins.

On a difficult wet pitch both sides showed their quality in a quick tempo game. Winchester put in an excellent display and were unlucky to find Saints keeper Lucy Venables and defence, typified by good performances from Beth Whitehorn and Bekah Tonks, in sound form.

Saints had scored 85 goals from just nine games before the match and Cleo Rawlings, Ruby Collinson and Katherine Robertson made it an amazing 88 to clinch the Winchester and District Cardington League U16 title.

● Southampton Saints G&LFC U14s went close against Crofton Saints U14s when Tori Adlam broke through strongly only to see her shot well saved.

Crofton's strong and skilful right midfielder was penetrating Saints' defence and only keeper Millie Peake's good positioning and handling prevented them scoring.

Saints' five substitutes made a big difference, Lisbeth Mottashed foraging down the right and Elle Pearce doing the same down the left. Another sub Megan Chapman scored for Saints with a cool finish.

ish, Tiffany Eley added a second, showing great vision and awareness shooting low into the corner from 25 yards.

Chapman, with her back to the goal just inside her opponents' half, then set up Eley for her second with an overhead kick, a very clever pass.

Adlam showed strength and desire to break through and to make it 4-0 and Eley's excellent through ball then set up Vogue Davies made it five. The scoring was completed with a penalty by Chapman.

Portsmouth Uni 0 Southampton Saints G&LFC U10 5

SOUTHAMPTON Saints under 10's played Portsmouth University for the second time in the league, this time away, Saints U10 player Jennifer King writes.

The Saints Girls went into the game a bit unsure, seeing that they had missed the previous training due to recent torrential weather.

However their fears faded away after kick off as Jennifer King put Saints through 1-0 after eight minutes. Simge Rosz made some great passes and had a shot on goal.

Portsmouth university made some good attempts high Phoebe Emery kept out. Just before half time Kia Anteney slotted the ball passed the Uni goalie making it 2-0 at half time.

King completed her hat-trick after half-time to make it 4-0. Lisa Gilham's hard work paid off as she made it 5-0 to Southampton putting them in an excellent position to challenge for the league.



IN THE SUN: Saints Under-10s at St Mary's.

TENNIS SPOTLIGHT

Goodall leads Brit pack

HAMPSHIRE'S Josh Goodall will lead the charge when play starts this weekend in the AEGON GB Pro-Series event in Bournemouth, which offers free entry to spectators.

The 26-year-old British No 4, from Basingstoke, will spearhead a strong British attack at the men's \$10,000 event with the likes of fellow Brits Alex Ward, Richard Bloomfield, Morgan Phillips and Andrew Fitzpatrick also in the top 10 ranked players.

Last year's beaten finalist Arthur De Greef (530) from Belgium and France's Jerome Inzerillo (553) will be the main threats to the British contingent.

Reigning US Open Junior champion Oliver Golding and current junior world number two Liam Broady will also be looking to mount their own challenge after graduating to the senior circuit.

Alongside the men's draw, there is also a women's \$10,000 event taking place.

Naomi Broady (197), sister of Liam, is the highest ranked player with Celine Cattaneo her closest ranked competitor at 371.

Anna Fitzpatrick, Jade Windley, Francesca Stephenson and Lucy Brown are the other Brits in the draw. Ireland's Amy Bowtell will be hoping a good showing will improved her 493 world ranking.

Tournament Director Richard Joyner said: "We are delighted to be returning to the West Hants Club for the AEGON GB Pro-Series Bournemouth event."

"The event has firmly established itself as the season opener to the international clay court season in Britain, and attracts a good combination of British and overseas professional players."

"The facilities at the club are first class, and the players really enjoy coming to the south coast for the start of the outdoor season. It's also a great opportunity for tennis fans to watch some pro tennis at close hand and free of charge."

The organisers and players alike will be hoping this year's tournament can live up to the drama of 2011.

Two qualifiers, Enrico Burzi (Italy) and De Greef, contested an entertaining final while Brit Alex Slabinsky made it to the semi-final before bowing out to Burzi.

Germany's Scarlett Werner beat 2010 champion Romana Tabak (Slovak Republic) in the women's singles.

Bournemouth also saw the start of David Rice and Sean Thornley's journey to the men's doubles competition at Wimbledon as the British pair captured the Pro-Series title.

The qualifying events start Sunday 22 April with the main draw two days later, Tuesday 24. The doubles finals are scheduled for Friday 27 and Saturday 28, with the men's singles final on Saturday 28 and women's singles final on Sunday 29.



EMAIL YOUR VIEWS TO echosport@dailyecho.co.uk

Hampshire Cricket Spotlight



Hamza excited about his new start

Simon Walter

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CRICKET REPORTER

FOR four years he was surplus to requirements in the LV County Championship – but Hamza Riazuddin is back.

The 22-year-old was a controversial selection ahead of Billy Taylor when he made his first-team debut against Somerset at the beginning of Paul Terry's final season as Hampshire manager.

That match, in May 2008, is best remembered for James Tomlinson's career-best spell of 8-46 in unusually seamer-friendly conditions at Taunton.

When Riazuddin was brought on, he took 1-21 from his six overs – claiming the scalp of Ian Blackwell – as Somerset were routed for 126.

Predictably, the wicket flattened out at the most batter-friendly ground in the country and Riazuddin finished wicketless while conceding 78 from 23 overs against a line-up also including Marcus Trescothick, Justin Langer and Craig Kieswetter.

Riazuddin was studying hard for his A-levels at the time and was only used in limited-overs competition thereafter, making 38 one-day/Twenty 20 appearances.

That is, until last week.

Having impressed in pre-season, Riazuddin, right, was given his opportunity in the absence of Dimi Mascarenhas – the master to whom the apprentice is often compared.

"I'm just happy to be playing," he said.

"For a long time I didn't get a look-in in Championship cricket and was filtered in as a one-day specialist bowler.

"I always felt I could do a job but wouldn't say the last two years have gone to plan.

"Just to get on the field for the first game of the season was really exciting."

After a wicketless start, Riazuddin took 3-51 in Gloucestershire's second innings, with Michael Bates taking one of his eight catches off his former academy teammate.

"I felt good and finally find some rhythm, with the keeper up there were things happening," said the all-rounder, for whom Bates also took the catch that dismissed Glamorgan rookie Nick James during Riazuddin's 1-21 at Cardiff on Thursday. "Batesy does a brilliant job, I trust him 100 per cent to take any catch or stumping that comes," he added.



BATES LOOKS IN FINE NIC!



**Wicketkeeper's
innings was
just like Pothas**

THERE were many silver linings in Hampshire's defeat against Gloucestershire last week, one being the outstanding all-round performance of Michael Bates.

The biggest compliment that can be paid to Hampshire's young wicketkeeper is that he did a fine impression of Nic Pothas with the bat.

For a while it looked like his efforts would help Hampshire escape with a draw at the Ageas Bowl.

Released at the end of last season, Pothas is remembered for consistently digging Hampshire's top order out of trouble.

His record shows him to be the greatest wicketkeeper/batsman in the county's history, but Bates' record is comparable with Pothas's at the same stage of his Hampshire career.

Bates took eight catches as well as scoring 87 in his 16th Championship appearance for Hampshire last week.

Both were competition career-bests.

Similarly, Pothas scored a then Hampshire-best 99 in his 16th Championship match, against Surrey at the end of the 2002 season, finishing his maiden county summer with 597 runs at 23.9.

While Pothas was a vastly experienced 28 with three one-day internationals behind him, he was adapting to conditions very different to what he was used to in South Africa.

As an inexperienced 21, Bates is also treading new ground – but his figures do not lose anything in comparison with a Hampshire legend.

Having registered a career-best 'first-class' score of 93 in Hampshire's opening game of the season against Loughborough MCCU, he already has

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CRICKET REPORTER

a respectable record of 480 runs at 21.7 – and 184 at 61.7 before facing Glamorgan.

No-one is expecting Bates to get close to Pothas's first-class Hampshire batting record of 7,549 at 43.9, but his glovework is exceptional.

It is impossible to say how many runs Bates will save Hampshire over the course of the season, but he has significantly more dismissals (49 catches & 4 stumpings) to his name than Pothas (30 & 4) did after 16 Championship outings.

And, as Pothas used to do so well, Bates is not looking too far ahead.

As he prepared for the trip to Cardiff, he reflected on his performance against Gloucestershire at The Ageas Bowl.

"We were bitterly disappointed that we fell at the last hurdle," he said. "I would have loved to have seen the team through, secure the draw and potentially even win the game."

"But it was very pleasing to get some runs under my belt – I'm feeling pretty good at the moment, batting-wise – and I caught them all right in that game as well, so I'm feeling very positive."

"Throughout the season we've decided we're going to try to keep pretty level headed about all our cricket, whether we win, whether we lose or whether we draw."

"There's a feeling throughout the camp that we've managed to achieve that so far. Everyone's looking in good form, we've prepared well and there were plenty of positives to take."



CONTACT THE SPORTSDESK - EMAIL: echosport@dailyecho.co.uk

Hampshire Cricket Spotlight

HE now sits proudly atop a pantheon including Shane Warne, Stuart Clark and Shane Bond.

When you consider the quality of other bowlers who have played for Hampshire over the last 12 years – including Chris Tremlett and Wasim Akram – David Balcombe has every right to feel proud of his record-breaking performance against Gloucestershire last week.

Revitalised after his successful spell on loan at Kent at the end of last season, Balcombe recorded the best first-class figures in Ageas/Rose Bowl history when he took 8-71 in Gloucestershire's first innings.

"I was kindly notified of that fact by James Tomlinson, to have the best figures seems ridiculous to me but I'm very proud," he smiled afterwards.

"Fortunately, they needed them instead of playing and missing and the nicks carried.

Brilliant

"It's just great to be doing this for Hampshire, to do it for my 'proper team' so to speak is brilliant.

"It was a bit nerve-wracking getting the Hampshire shirt back on but it was great to be out there – there's a fresh feel to the whole bowling attack."

Balcombe returned 33 wickets at 17.8 in his five Championship matches for Kent last year.

And after taking 5-33 in Glamorgan's first innings at Cardiff on Thursday, he already has 16 at 9.5 this year.

After the first day at The SWALEC Stadium, he had an incredible 49 wickets at 15.1 in his last seven Championship matches.

Having made just 17 Championship appearances in five seasons with Hampshire before last week – his rare first-team outings due only in part to injuries – Balcombe is showing the benefits of faith finally being shown in his ability.

It is no surprise that Balcombe has taken his opportunity.

At 6ft 4in, he has been Hampshire's tallest bowler since Tremlett's departure and his ability to bowl consistent away swing at a decent pace also makes him a significant threat.

He will continue to be helped at The Ageas Bowl this year by Hampshire's policy of preparing more seamer-friendly surfaces to improve their chances of winning Championship home games – something the county has done only once in the last three years.

"We left a bit of grass on the pitch against

Early season boost for Balcombe

Best first-class bowling figures at The Ageas Bowl.

8-71 D Balcombe, Hants v Gloucs 2012
8-90 AD Mullally, Hants v Warwicks 2001
7-28 KW Hogg, Lancs v Hants, 2011
7-64 Mushtaq, Sussex v Hants, 2006
7-66 SE Bond, Hants v Sussex, 2008
7-68 SR Patel, Notts v Hants 2011
7-82 SR Clark, Hants v Lancs, 2007
7-99 SK Warne, Hants v Middlesex 2006
7-107 AU Rashid, Yorks v Hants, 2008
7-140 Imran Tahir, Hants v Somerset, 2009

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CRICKET REPORTER

Gloucestershire and it was swinging early," he said.

"The grass doesn't necessarily mean it will do a bit more but gives it a bit more carry which for me is brilliant.

"I see Michael Bates taking the ball up by his waist rather than by his ankles!

"It keeps you in the game and means nicks carry.

"They're just good pitches really.

"And it's always nice to get a nice lush outfield that doesn't scuff the ball up like it did in the Windies [during

Hampshire's pre-season tour!]

Balcombe took his wickets for Kent last year with the Tiflex ball that was being experimented with in division two.

The ball soon gained a reputation for its propensity to swing.

Jettisoned

It has been jettisoned this year, having favoured the bowlers too much.

But Balcombe has been just as successful with the traditional Duke cherry.

"There's a lot of talk about the Tiflex and the Duke and that one does more than the other, but it's just about

consistency and putting the ball in the right areas," he said.

In the absence of the experienced trio of Kabir Ali (ankle), Tomlinson (foot) and Dimi Mascarenhas, Balcombe has also risen to the challenge of leading the Hampshire attack.

"With Kabby on the sidelines I've had to take that bit more responsibility but I had that task at Kent and I said to Chalks (manager Giles White) when I came back that I really thrived off that," he continued.

"Chalks really wants me to take a leadership role within the bowling group and I quite like the respon-

sibility I've got this year.

"It's brilliant that I get to chat to Hamza [Riazuddin] and Woody (Chris Wood) and we've got some sound heads in the slips like Kat (Simon Katich), who's brilliant putting his advice across.

"We've got a really good young squad and a great crop of bowlers.

"We're a smaller squad this year but there's competition for places, it's a brilliant unit and there's a real sense of playing for each other.

"That showed against Gloucestershire. When catches went down, heads didn't."

Glamorgan staging a fightback

HUW Waters recorded career best bowling figures as Glamorgan fought their way back into their LV County Championship Division Two clash against Hampshire on the second day at Cardiff.

The Welsh seamer, who missed most of last season with a stress fracture in his back, helped to bowl Hampshire out in their first innings for 156 with figures of seven for 53.

By the close Glamorgan had reached 73 for three in their second innings, an overall lead of 20.

After resuming on 29 for one Hampshire had reached lunch at 108 for four to lead by five runs.

But though they had got themselves into the lead they suffered three setbacks during the morning session.

Waters, who had claimed the wicket of Hampshire captain Jimmy Adams yesterday evening, struck again to trap opener Liam Dawson lbw to leave the visitors 56 for two.

Simon Katich, the first man to score a Test century at the ground during the Ashes clash of 2009, lasted only 16 balls before being trapped leg before attempting to whip fellow Australian Moises Henriques on to the leg-side. That left Hampshire 70 for three.

Michael Carberry looked well set until he was dealt a painful blow in the groin and next ball he top-edged a hook straight to Waters at fine leg to give Henriques his second wicket in the space of three overs.

After lunch Hampshire lost three wickets for the addition of just four runs in 19 balls.

Eight deliveries after the interval Sean Ervine was trapped leg before by Waters, who claimed his fourth wicket when James Vince edged an attempted hook straight to wicket-keeper Mark Wallace.

The third wicket came when Jim Allenby had Chris Wood leg before to leave Hampshire 112 for seven.

After more than an hour for rain Waters returned to take two more wickets.

He produced a fine delivery to have Michael Bates caught behind and in his next over he had Hamza Riazuddin caught at mid-on as Hampshire subsided to 137 for nine.

Waters completed his seven-wicket haul by having Danny Briggs caught at backward point.

Glamorgan employed a new opening partnership for the second innings with Nick James taking over from Stewart Walters.

But after a promising start it was the more established opener Gareth Rees who went. After driving David Balcombe for consecutive fours he was then bowled via an inside edge by the Hampshire seamer.

Six overs later Will Bragg was also out trapped leg before by Riazuddin to leave Glamorgan 34 for two.

James had reached 30 impressively until he was bowled shouldering arms to Ervine leaving Glamorgan 64 for three.

Local Cricket Spotlight

Terry line looks a good one

PAUL Terry has declared that his son Sean has got the ability to one day follow in his footsteps and play for the senior England team.

The 20-year Southampton-born player made his first class debut for Hampshire earlier this month against Loughborough University at The Ageas Bowl.

Batting at number seven in the first innings, he scored an unbeaten 59.

He didn't get a chance to bat in the second innings of a game Hampshire won comfortably.

"I genuinely believe he's got the talent to open the innings for Hampshire and England," said former Hampshire team manager Paul.

"I'm very proud of him.

"Sean's working hard, he knows he's got a lot to learn as a young



SEAN TERRY

player, but he's keeping his feet on the ground and he's improving.

"It's all about consistency and putting the runs on the board when the team needs them most."

Terry senior has been living in Australia since leaving Hampshire in 2009.

"I don't have any plans to return to the UK or to coach again in county cricket," he explained.

"I've got my academy in Western Australia and currently during the off-season in Perth I'm working for the helmet manufacturers Mizuno.

"I'm very happy to be settled in Australia but I still keep up to date with Hampshire's results and I always want the team to be successful."

Big day

WICKETKEEPER Adam Rouse leads a strong and talented young Hampshire team in this Sunday's twenty20 challenge match against South Wilts at Bemerton, 2.30pm.

The match is part of the celebrations to mark the opening of the Salisbury club's new £1.3m clubhouse and pavilion.

It will be preceded by the Hampshire Hockey Association Cup semi-final tie between Salisbury and Fareham (push back 11.30am).

Hampshire XI: Adam Rouse (capt), Sean Terry, Matt King, Rob Gibson, Jake George, Jack Sheppard, James Haggarty, Lewis McManus, Jack Wood, Tom Barber, James Halson.

South Wilts: James Hayward, Tom Morton, James Hibberd, Eddie Abel, Rob Pittman, Steve Riddle, Rob Franklin, Tom Pearce, Sam Pittman, Thomas Morton, Dorn Ducellier.

Ervine is new star

LYMINGTON have swooped to sign "miracle" man **Craig Ervine** – the Zimbabwean Test cricketer who was once close to having his hand amputated.

Ervine, the younger brother of Hampshire star Sean Ervine, has joined the Southern Premier League outfit as their overseas player for the coming season, writes **NEIL PERRETT**.

The 26-year-old all-rounder has played two Test matches for Zimbabwe and also lined up in the World Twenty20 Cup in 2010 and last year's ICC World Cup.

Predominantly a left-handed batsman, Ervine, who plays for the Matabeleland Tuskers, is also an off-spin bowler and has beaten the odds to forge a career in professional cricket.

A freak accident in his early teens – when he slipped and fell on broken glass at the family home – required a three-hour reconstructive operation to his right hand.

However, but for the intervention of his mother – who was a nurse during wartime – Ervine would have had his hand amputated as the initial diagnosis had been grim.

Ervine said: "I went home from school one weekend and my two brothers decided we should have a game of cricket in the garden.

"I climbed on top of the pelmet to get some keys and my foot slipped off the window sill. My hand went through the window and I ended up landing on the jagged pieces of glass.

"It split open my wrist and I was rushed to hospital where the doctor said they would have to amputate the hand.

"Fortunately, my mum is a retired nurse and she said they needed to try to do the best they could and see what they could do.

"They managed to sew it up. It was a miracle!

"I am very lucky to have a mum like her because she knew exactly what to do so it was a blessing.

"It does still affect me a little but it is something I have got used to."

In August 2011, Ervine faced Bangladesh in Zimbabwe's first Test following the country's six-year exile.

And just seven months ago, he hit 49 in his second Test against Pakistan, the hosts including highly-rated spinner Saeed Ajmal in their attack.

PROMISING South Wilts all-rounder Owen Alsop took 4-38 to help Wiltshire beat Berkshire by six wickets to regain the Marlborough Cup they last won in 2009.

Alsop, right, who has recently returned from a successful winter in Melbourne, produced the



best Wiltshire figures as Berkshire were dismissed for 139, new Bashley captain Richard Morris (39) making top score.

Another South Wilts prospect, Jack Mynot, hit 21 not out to help Wiltshire home.



At last year's ICC World Cup in India, Ervine top scored with 66 as Zimbabwe completed their group matches with a convincing win over Kenya.

At the World Twenty20 Cup in the

Caribbean in 2010, he helped his country to victory over Australia in a warm-up game.

Ervine, who will undertake some coaching duties with Lymington, is also hoping to play for Hampshire seconds this season.

He appeared for them against Dorset in last Sunday's friendly at the Ageas Bowl's Nursery Ground.

Ervine's stay in England was arranged through former Lymington captain Christian Pain and Funky Sports, sponsors of Sean Ervine.

"I am looking forward to the season," added Ervine. "It benefits me coming over and is good to play on different wickets and in different conditions."



CRAIG ERVINE

DAILY ECHO - BEST FOR HAMPSHIRE REPORTS THROUGH THE SEASON

Local Cricket Spotlight

at Lymington



OH BROTHER:
Sean Ervine, left,
and sibling Craig.

Rouse keeps up Symondian hope

HAMPSHIRE 2nd XI prospect Adam Rouse has solved St Cross Symondians' wicketkeeper crisis for the upcoming ECB Southern Electric Premier League season.

The Winchester club found themselves short of a front line 'keeper when Charlie Cooke, who is now working in London, decided to play Middlesex Premier League cricket for

Hampstead.

But St Cross acted swiftly to secure the signature of Rouse, who previously played for his home town club Basingstoke & North Hants.

St Cross, who begin their Premier League programme against Alton at the Royal Green Jackets Ground on May 5, will boast a far sharper attack this season.



ADAM ROUSE

Griffiths leads the way

DAVID Griffiths and teenager Rob Gibson shared an important seventh-wicket partnership which paved the way for a 75-run win for Hampshire 2nd XI over Dorset at the Ageas Bowl Nursery Ground.

Sean Terry (39), Wilf Marriott (23), Craig Ervine (30) and Adam Rouse (29) all made starts for Hampshire, who slipped to 161-6.

But Griffiths (65) and Academy all-rounder Gibson (57) turned the tide by adding 94 for the seventh wicket to take Hampshire to 289-7.

Lymington's Glyn Treagus (64) continued his good early season form by top scoring in Dorset's 214-6.



GRIFFITHS

Hampshire Second XI	
SP Terry b Denham	39
WWJ Marriott b Hicks	23
C Ervine lbw b Hicks	30
AP Rouse c Denham b Treagus	29
J George c Wolstenholme b Quinn	4
CJ Haggett c Hicks b Quinn	17
RAM Gibson c House b Treagus	57
DA Griffiths not out	65
JSD Haggaty not out	11
Extras	14
Total (7 wickets, 50 overs)	289
Fall: 1-55, 2-77, 3-102, 4-111, 5-140, 6-161, 7-255	
Bowling: Wolstenholme 10-0-49-0, Denham 10-2-45-1, Barlow 10-0-66-0, Hicks 7-0-30-2, Quinn 3-0-16-2, Treagus 10-0-83-2	

Dorset	
GR Treagus lbw b Makin	64
A Williams c Makin b Griffiths	7
JM Lawrence b Makin	33
DJ Cowley c and b Makin	32
CL Park lbw b Haggaty	4
Masoor Khan c Ervine b Sheppard	36
MA House not out	16
C Quinn not out	5
Extras	17
Total (6 wickets, 50 overs)	214
Fall: 1-22, 2-83, 3-121, 4-143, 5-154, 6-199	
Bowling: Griffiths 10-2-31-1, Haggett 10-1-61-0, Sheppard 10-1-40-1, Haggaty 10-0-33-1, Makin 10-1-40-3	
Hampshire Second XI won by 75 runs	

Hants are a bit short

HAMPSHIRE Under-17s lost by five wickets to Havant, having rescued themselves from a top order batting collapse.

Batting on a slow, low Havant Park surface, the county youngsters slumped to 44-6 before Jack Wood (48) and Julian Parvess (29) gave the innings some substance.

But Havant eased past the Hampshire total of 141-8, with Jez Bull hitting 41.

Cricket Stats

KP gets his first t20 ton

FORMER Hampshire batsman Kevin Pietersen this week hit the headlines for his first ever t20 century.

The England star hit an unbeaten 103 for the Delhi Daredevils against Deccan Chargers.

Pietersen, though, still has come way to go

to match up to t20's greatest master blaster, West Indian superstar Chris Gayle.

Gayle, right, has struck seven t20 centuries in his career – three more than anyone else has managed.

Six of those hundreds have amazingly come in the last 12 months – for four different teams in four different competitions!



Sept 11, 2007

Gayle blitzed 117 off just 57 balls – his century came off 50 deliveries – for West Indies against South Africa in Johannesburg. He cracked 10 sixes and seven fours as the Windies rattled up 205-8 off their 20 overs – but still lost by eight wickets!

April 22, 2011

Gayle's unbeaten 102 came off 55 balls and contained 10 fours and seven sixes as his Indian Premier League side Royal Challengers Bangalore defeated Kolkata.

May 6 2011

Gayle struck 107 off 49 balls with 10 fours and nine sixes as Royal Challengers Bangalore defeated Kings XI Punjab in the Indian Premier League.

Nov 29, 2011

Gayle's 109 off 59 balls helped Matabeleland Tuskers beat Mid West Rhinos in the Zimbabwean Stanbic Bank t20 series. He hammered eight sixes and seven fours in his ton.

Dec 23, 2011

Gayle blasted an undefeated 100 off 54 balls with 11 sixes and only three fours to help Sydney Thunder to a KFC Australian Big Bash win against Adelaide in Sydney.

Feb 10, 2012

Gayle blitzed an unbeaten 101 off 44 balls with 10 sixes and seven fours to help Barisal Burners to a 10-wicket win against Sylhet Royals in the Bangladesh Premier League.

Feb 14, 2012

Four days later Gayle blasted another Bangladesh Premier League century, this time 116 in a losing cause against Dhaka Gladiators with six fours and 11 sixes.

BOOK of the WEEK

Running For Their Lives
By Mark Whitaker

Sportsbookofthemonth.com price:
£ 11.15 saving 38 % on rrp

The extent to which Olympic athletes dedicate themselves to their respective sport never ceases to amaze those of us who might be a tad podgier than we would prefer.

Hour upon hour of running, followed by weight training, sprinting and yet more running have become the essential daily routine for most athletes hoping to appear at this year's Games.

Furthermore, it is essential that a well-regulated athletic approach is complemented by an equally disciplined way of life away from sport if the athlete is to harbour realistic ambitions of securing a medal.

No weekend blow-outs or a few beers after work several nights a week.

Yet sport's professional nature ensures that all of the sacrifice is deemed worthwhile when the athlete wins.

Imagine, then, an amateur athlete showing similar levels of dedication to his sport, initially to raise publicity for a cause which had him adapting the role of David against the Goliath that was the South African state.

When Brighton-born teacher Arthur Newton left for South Africa in 1911 to become a farmer, he had absolutely no athletic background nor experience beyond running occasional races at school.

Yet following a dramatic turn of events, the 28 year-old was to become

"the world's greatest distance runner".

After serving in the First World War, Newton returned to Natal to discover he was at the centre of a land dispute with the South African government over the condition of his neglected farm.

Frustrated, Newton undertook to use astonishing feats of athleticism to publicise his case.

This was no undertaking 'to get fit' of the type many of us are familiar with.

Newton's frustration pushed him to extraordinary extremes which eventually resulted in him breaking the 24-hour distance record, as well as twice smashing the world 100-mile record.

On the second occasion, he was 51.

It's unlikely he would have carried on without the assistance of Peter Gavuzzi, a Folkestone-born steward on an ocean liner who met Newton in Los Angeles before the start of the inaugural 3,500-mile 'Transcontinental Foot Race' in 1928.

Theirs is a fascinating partnership and this is a truly incredible tale of endurance, determination and sheer bloody-mindedness of the type we may hear much of this summer.

But it's unlikely anything the Olympics throws up will match what Newton and Gavuzzi did.

The Sports Pink has teamed up with Sports Book of the Month & have a signed copy of *Running For Their Lives* to give away.

To win this week's sports book, go to www.sportsbookofthemonth.com and answer the following question ...

Who is the current Olympic marathon champion?

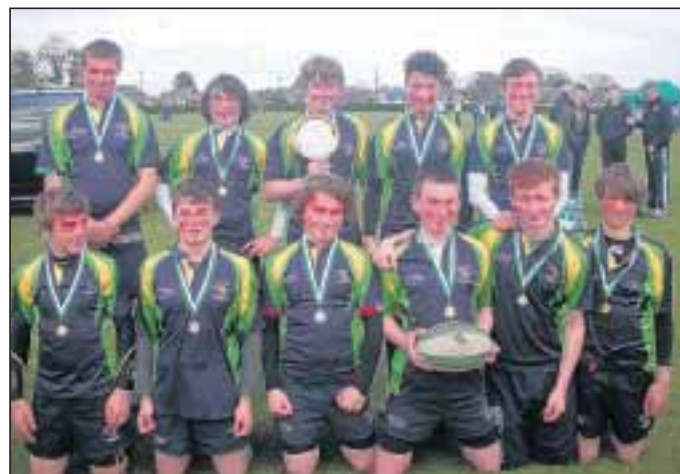
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ALL SMILES: New Milton Colts.



WINNERS: New Milton Under-15s.



WINNERS: Fawley Under-16s.



WINNERS: New Milton Under-14s, above, and Under-13s, left.

THERE was home success when New Milton hosted a Sevens youth tournament last weekend.

The club's under-13s, under-14s and under-15s all won their respective age groups' Plate silverware.

RESULTS

Under 13 cup: Tottonians A 20 US Portsmouth 25
Under 13 plate: Alton 15 New Milton B 25
Under 14 cup: Trojans 47 Ringwood 0
Under 14 plate: Tottonians 0 New Milton 49
Under 15 cup: Trojans 22 Tottonians A 12
Under 15 plate: New Milton 33 Fordingbridge 7
Under 16 cup competition: 1st Alton; 2nd Tottonians; 3rd Basingstoke; 4th Dorchester; 5th New Milton; 6th Ringwood; 7th Trojans; 8th Fawley; 9th Stevenage
Colts competition: 1st Wimborne; 2nd Tottonians A; 3rd New Milton; 4th

DAILY ECHO - BEST FOR RUGBY ALL SEASON

Youth Sport Special

FOR NEW MILTON



TOP TEAM: Tottonians Under-16s.



TOP TEAM: New Milton's Tom Gould accelerates through a tackle to score against Tottonians B.



TOP TEAM: New Milton's Sam O'Regan scores in the corner.



ON THE RUN: Tournament action above and below..



TROPHY TIME: Trojans.

Sports Quiz

- 1 Huddersfield coach Nathan Brown is set to move to which of their Stobart Super League rivals for next season?
- 2 From which club did Mike Tindall join Gloucester in 2005?
- 3 Which four teams are through to the Europa League semi-finals?
- 4 Danny Kerry is the women's head coach of which sport's British national squad?
- 5 What nationality is Newcastle goal-keeper Tim Krul?
- 6 In which year did Hibernian last win the Scottish Cup?
- 7 Who scored six tries for Wigan in last weekend's 98-4 Carnegie Challenge Cup win over North Wales?
- 8 Who hit a century for West Indies in their 1975 Cricket World Cup final win over Australia?
- 9 How many grand slam titles did Ivan Lendl win?
- 10 Who won the PGA Championship in 2010?
- 11 Who scored the 'ghost' goal awarded by referee Martin Atkinson in the FA Cup semi-final between Chelsea and Tottenham?
- 12 What nationality is 17-year-old Luca Brecel, who has become the youngest player to earn a place at the snooker World Championship?
- 13 Nico Rosberg claimed his first Formula One victory at the Chinese Grand Prix in Shanghai after how many races: 101, 111, 121.
- 14 Sourav Ganguly is the captain of which Indian Premier League team?
- 15 Colin Shields represents Great Britain at which sport?



- 16 Which two Italian clubs did Barcelona coach Pep Guardiola play for during his career?
- 17 Who is the captain of Leicestershire?
- 18 Who stepped down as head coach of Premiership side Gloucester earlier this week?
- 19 Which Argentinian player won his only grand slam title at the 2004 French Open?
- 20 Where will the 2012 Ryder Cup be played?
- 21 Name the current Spain coach who has agreed a new deal through to the 2014 World Cup.
- 22 Lord Coe competed at which two Olympic Games for Great Britain?
- 23 The Bahrain Grand Prix was first held in which year?
- 24 Reading manager Brian McDermott began his playing career with which club?
- 25 The Phoenix Coyotes play in which North American major sports league?

ANSWERS

The National Hockey League.
 1 St Helens; 2 Bath; 3 Athletic Bilbao.
 Valencia; 4 Hockey; 5 Dutch; 6 1902;
 7 Sam Tomkins; 8 Clive Lloyd; 9 Eight;
 10 Martin Kaymer; 11 Juan Mata; 12
 Belgium; 13 111; 14 Pune Warriors; 15
 Matthew Hoggard; 16 Brescia and Roma;
 17 Bryan Redpath;
 19 Gaston Gaudio; 20 Medinah
 Country Club; 21 Vicente Del
 Bosque; 22 Moscow 1980, Los
 Angeles 1984; 23 2004; 24 Arsenal; 25

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LONDON 2012 OLYMPICS COUNTDOWN



Luxury at Games

2012 Olympic goers who demand posh accommodations can still find available rooms at London's luxury hotels during the July 25–August 12 Games timeframe.

However, as other hotels in and around the British capital are doing, they are increasing their rates significantly, a new survey has found.

For example, for the period spanning August 2nd to August 5th (Thursday to Sunday), 20 of central London's 70 5-star hotels are still posting vacancies.

On average, they are hiking the price of those available rooms by 62% over regular rates.

However, huge cost differences can be seen from one luxury hotel to another.

For example, the Meridian Piccadilly, located on the border of Mayfair and St. James, has double rooms listed at £538, which is only 6% higher than its usual rate of £503.

It's a completely different story close to the Olympic Stadium at the Town Hall Hotel, however.

There, in general, a room that can typically be had for £249 is now charging £880 during the Games.

That figure equates to a 253% price elevation.

Olympics warning

DEPARTMENT store chain Debenhams posted higher profits this week but it warned the Olympics and the Euro 2012 tournament may disrupt future sales.

The group, which has 164 stores in the UK and Ireland, reported that pre-tax profits rose 1.4% to £127.1 million in the six months to March 3, which was ahead of City expectations.

But it warned that the second half of its year could be hit by the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the Olympics and the Euro 2012 football championships, which may cause people to divert spending onto barbecues, beer and televisions.

Chief executive Michael Sharp said: "I know from experience that the football disrupts sales by causing people to spend more money on barbecues, beer and TV."

"I have no idea what impact the Olympic Games will have."

No strike

OLYMPIC chiefs are confident that the London 2012 Games will not be affected by union strikes.

Len McCluskey, the leader of Britain's biggest union Unite, suggested in February that industrial action could be timed to disrupt the Games.

But Jeremy Hunt, the secretary of state for culture, media and sport, said he believed union leaders would realise public opinion was against strikes during the Games.

Hunt said: "We are a free country and a democratic country and people have a right to strike."

"But I am very confident union leaders will understand that the vast majority of their members, and the overwhelming majority of the public, do not want the Olympic Games in any way held back or disrupted by strike action."

Simon Walter

simon.walter@dailyecho.co.uk

IAIN Percy is hoping for a unique double – Saints promotion and a THIRD Olympic gold.

But, like Saints' Premiership bid, it has not all been plain sailing for Percy and his GB partner Andrew Simpson as they prepare to defend their Olympic title in the Star class this summer.

Like any successful Olympian, Percy's preparations for London 2012 have involved many sacrifices.

Watching his hometown club's Premiership charge has been a long way down on his list of priorities.

"Going to St Mary's is the sort of fun thing I'm looking forward to doing after the Games; I'll be there with everyone else next year – especially if we're back in the Premiership," laughs Percy, who together with Simpson is training 14 hours a day.

The south-coast duo have been competing together since they were ten-year-olds, but are still honing their gold-medal-winning telepathy with London 2012 now only 97 days away.

They are currently focused on ironing out flaws in their performance at last week's World Cup regatta in Palma.

"We're working very hard, we spent the winter in the south of Spain which went well but were very disappointed in Palma to miss out to our main rivals, the Brazilians, by a point," explained Percy, who was schooled at King Edward VI.

"We were one wave away from getting them on the line to win the last race, which was frustrating."

"But we'd only done four races in eight months and to be honest that showed during the week. We made some schoolboy errors which cost us."

"But we're all going to be a lot better in the summer – we're looking forward to a real fight."

The pair's racing time has been limited as Percy has struggled with foot and back injuries during the last year.

He and Simpson were forced to withdraw from the World Championships in Perth in December because he was suffering from so much back pain.

But they have both worked with sponsors Clarks to create a bespoke new sailing boat that should now prevent the hiking strap from bursting blood vessels in Percy's foot.

"I've had no issues with the foot since but the back was a concern at the Worlds," admitted 36-year-old Percy.

"It's a sign of old age, I was worrying about it and had a few sleepless nights but I feel a lot more confident with it now."

"There were two windy days at the end of our last event and the back had never felt better so that was really encouraging."

The other good news is that Percy and Simpson have been here before.

It was not all plain sailing for them going into Beijing 2008, as they were 52nd at that year's World Championships before winning Olympic gold six months later.

SAINTS FAN HIS FINGERS

We're all going to be a lot better in the summer – we're looking forward to a real fight



GOLDEN BOY: Iain Percy pictured back in 2008.

"We're good at taking where we are, we don't get fazed," Percy continued.

"We're not hiccup-prone, there

are just a lot of things that can go wrong with sailing, particularly technical issues."

"You're always having to reassess

where you are."

While Brazil will be the pair's main rivals this summer, there is sure to be strong competition from elsewhere.

Simpson said: "Poland are very strong, the Swedish team is always capable of doing well and there's always another couple of world champions or Olympic medallists somewhere who could pop up and perform on the day."

"Beating Brazil is one of our main goals but we can't discount anyone else."

Next up for Percy and Simpson are two events in southern France –

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THE OLYMPICS IN THE SPORTS PINK



LONDON 2012 OLYMPICS COUNTDOWN



IAIN KEEPING CROSSED...



FLASHBACK: Iain Percy and Andrew Simpson celebrate Olympic gold in Beijing in 2008.

they arrived in Hyeres on Friday for the ISAF Sailing World Cup - before the Skandia Sail for Gold regatta in Weymouth at the beginning of June.

"That's a real warm-up event and that's it for competition, but we'll do more race training in Weymouth," Percy continued.

So how much of an advantage will home advantage be this summer?

"We've worked hard on sailing at the venue and how to sail the conditions but won't see the benefits of that till the summer," said Simpson, who comes from

Sherborne in north Dorset.

"There will be a tiny advantage potentially but the others can all sail there as well so it's not like it's exclusive to us."

What is certain is that Percy and Simpson will continue to give it their all.

"We have to sail a lot until we get a sixth sense of how to sail the boat in specific conditions" continued Percy, who won his first Olympic gold in the Finn class at Sydney 2000, before teaming up with Simpson. "We're spending five hours a day on the water and the rest in the gym or on technical

issues.

"Sailors - and star sailors in particular - do more hours than anyone because of all the technical elements to it. It's very tiring but satisfying knowing we've done all we can. We'll continue to work as hard as we can for the next three months and then we'll have to do the business."

● **Iain Percy and Andrew Simpson are sponsored by Clarks. "Clarks have left no stone unturned in developing performance footwear for sailing," says Percy.**

Tramps are all for Louise - but they're posh tramps!

WINCHESTER'S Olympic hopeful Louise Damen has attracted a unique bunch of supporters as she looks to claim the last marathon place on the British team for London - a bunch of Special Brew-drinking tramps.

Damen will contest the Virgin London Marathon this Sunday in the hopes of joining Paula Radcliffe and Mara Yamauchi in the three-strong women's marathon team for this summer's Games.

And although she may not be widely known outside of athletics circles, the 29-year-old has revealed how her exploits have been gathering some attention from an unlikely source.

"Since I've had a bit more local media coverage a few people have started to recognise me," Damen said.

"One of my regular training runs goes past where a few tramps sit drinking Special Brew and I get a little shout of 'Go Louise' from them."

"It is Winchester, though, so they are quite posh tramps!"

It is quite remarkable that Damen is a runner at all, never mind one with Olympic ambitions, given that she was born without a left hip socket and spent several months in traction and splints as a baby.

She is also a

self-coached PE teacher who made her marathon debut in London last year and ran an excellent time of two hours 30 minutes, exactly one minute inside the Olympic qualifying standard.

However, Devon's Jo Pavey remains in pole position for the last Olympic place available by virtue



of her run of 2hrs 28mins 24secs in the same race, putting her third in the UK rankings over the last 12 months.

That time is 63 seconds quicker than her closest selection rival Claire Hallissey, but while Pavey sits out Sunday's race to concentrate on preparing for the summer, Hallissey, Damen and Liz Yelling will all compete and try to beat Pavey's time ahead of Monday's team selection.

Damen, who was forced to drop out of her only other marathon in Yokohama last November, said: "I've probably experienced the two ends of the spectrum."

"I had a great experience on my debut in London and then a horrible one in Yokohama."

"It taught me you can have a brilliant build-up but things can go wrong over 26 miles, it's a long way."

"I have taken those lessons on board and hopefully Sunday can be a progression in my career."



LOUISE DAMEN

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Monday's -

Bassett,
St Michaels & All Angels Church,
Bassett Ave, 5.30 & 7.30 pm.
Claire 07786 014101

Blackfield,
Fawley Royal British Legion,
Private Hall, Exbury Road, 6pm & 7.45pm.
Debbie 07865 994874

Chandlers Ford,
Chandlers Ford Community Centre,
Hursley Rd, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Liz 02380 788837

Eastleigh AM & PM,
The Cranbury Centre, Cranbury Road,
9.15 & 11.15am or 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Lorraine 07941 164776

Regents Park,
Regents Park Community College,
King Edwards Avenue, 5.30pm & 7.30pm.
Jo 02380 900899

Tuesday's

Bishops Waltham,
United Free Church,
Upper Basingwell Street, 7.30pm.
Mel 01489 890250

Bitterne,
Catholic Church Hall,
Commercial Street, 3.30, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Jo 07733 235039

Botley AM,
Botley Centre,
High Street, Botley, 9.15 & 11.00am.
Claire 02380 407551

Boyatt Wood,
Crestwood College,
Shakespeare Road, 5.15 & 7.15pm.
Jodie 07904 104262

Freemantle,
Freemantle CE Community Academy,
Mansion Road, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Claire 07786 014101

Hedge End,
St Johns Church, Underhill Centre,
St Johns Road, 5.15 & 7pm.
Claire 02380 407551

Lordswood,
Lordswood Community Centre,
Sandpiper Road, 6.30pm.
Angie 02380 777063

Redbridge,
All Saints Church Hall,
Sedbergh Road, 7pm.
Mags 07824 611832

New Times from 17th April -
Shirley AM,
Salvation Army Hall,
Victor Street, 9.30 & 11.30am.
Jo 02380 900899

Totton AM & PM,
Totton Christian Centre,
9 Ringwood Road,
9.30 & 11.30am or 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Liz 02380 788837

West End,
Hilldene Community Centre,
High Street, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Jo 07825 350244

Woodley,
Woodley Village Hall,
School Road, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Charlotte 07810 643419

Wednesday's

Bishopstoke,
Community Centre, 7pm.
Nicola 02380 696188

Bitterne Park AM & PM,
United Reformed Church,
Cobden Ave, Bitterne Park, 9.15am & 6pm.
Siobhan 07956 219585

Hythe,
St John's Hall, New Road,
Hythe, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Karen 02380 862990

Fleming Park,
Pavillion on the Park,
Kingfisher Road, Eastleigh, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Sarah 07734 713135

Hamble,
Hamble Sport's Complex,
Main Hall, Satchell Lane, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Hayley 07772 351717

Hounslowdown,
Hounslowdown School,
Jacobs Gutter Lane, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Emilie 07817 968028

Lordshill,
Lordshill Church,
Lordshill District Centre, 5.15 & 7.00pm.
Lynn 07971 354179

Sholing,
St Monica Junior School,
St Monica Road, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Heather 01489 784508

Thornhill Park,
Thornhill Baptist Church,
Thornhill Park Road, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Anji 02380 472737

Upper Shirley,
Isaac Watts Church,
Winchester Road/Luccombe Road, 7.30pm.
Sue 07841 338893

West Totton -
GROUP NOW
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HOUSDOWN

Thursday's

Bitterne AM,
Catholic Church Hall,
Commercial Street, 9.15 & 11.15am.
Jo 07733 235039

Calmore,
Calmore Community Centre, Calmore
Drive, Totton, 3.30, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Emilie 07817 968028

Chartwell Green,
Moorlands Community Centre,
Townhill Way, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Kay 07833 746532

Fleming Park AM,
Pavillion on the Park,
Kingfisher Road, Eastleigh, 9.15am.
Sarah 07734 713135

Hedge End,
Turnpike Sports Pavillion,
Turnpike Way, 1.15, 3.30, 5.15 & 7pm.
Claire 02380 407551

Highfield,
Highfield House Hotel,
Highfield Lane, 6pm & 7.45pm.
Jo 07733 235039

Hythe,
St John's Hall, New Road,
Hythe, 9.15am.
Karen 02380 862990

North Baddesley,
The Village Hall, Botley Road,
5.30 & 7.30pm.
Charlotte 07810 643419

Upper Shirley,
Atherley Bowling Club,
Hill Lane, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Paul 07891 085069

Weston,
Chamberlayne Leisure Centre,
Weston Lane, 3.30, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Hayley 07545 772258

Winchester,
Winchester RFC, North Walls Park,
Off Hilliers Way, 7.15pm.
Joyce 01962 883331

Friday's

New Group and New Consultant
from 27th April -
Hythe (BUTTS ASH),
St Annes Community Centre,
Warrys Close, 9.30 am.
Kim: 02380 843883

Saturday's

New Group and New Consultant
from 28th April -
Totton,
The Empire Hall,
Salisbury Road, 10am.
Toni: 02380 284107

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14 May : Eastbourne & Bluebell Railway 5 day	£319
14 May : North Devon - Ilfracombe 5 day	£259
14 May : Ostend & Brugge 5 day	£299
20 May : Nottingham, Peak District & Lincoln 5 day	£289
20 May : Bournemouth at Leisure 6 day	£239
21 May : Folkestone, Dover Castle & Brugge 5 day	£269
21 May : Torquay Steam & Sail 5 day	£247
25 May : Paris City Break 4 day	£259
26 May : Welsh Coast - Barmouth 8 day	£476
27 May : Northumbria 6 day	£409
28 May : Llandudno & Snowdonia 5 day	£319
28 May : Rhyl, Snowdonia & Chester 5 day	£217
28 May : A Cornish Gem 5 day	£365
28 May : Snowdonia & Little Trains 5 day	£358
28 May : A Cornish Delight 5 day	£269
01 Jun : Heart of England Singles Break 5 day	£309
01 Jun : Italy - Diano Marina All Inclusive 10 day	£779
02 Jun : Guernsey by Air 8 day	£574
02 Jun : London - Queens Diamond Jubilee 3 day	£199
02 Jun : Lake Garda and Venice 9 day	£649
03 Jun : Jersey, Guernsey & Sark 7 day	£679
03 Jun : Fort William, Loch Ness & Skye 8 day	£569
03 Jun : Cotswolds & Nostalgic Steam 5 day	£319
03 Jun : Blackpool and The Lakes 6 day	£309
03 Jun : Disneyland Paris 4 day	£282
04 Jun : Ludlow & The Shropshire Hills 5 day	£358
04 Jun : North Devon - Bideford 5 day	£246
04 Jun : English Lakes 5 day	£339
04 Jun : Warners Thoresby Hall 5 day	£425
08 Jun : Spain - Santa Susana 10 day	£569
09 Jun : Gardens of Cornwall 8 day	£499
10 Jun : Jersey by Sea 8 day	£498
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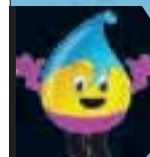
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HT 0-0	Att 35,557		
Blackburn	2	Norwich	0
HT 1-0	Att 23,218		
Bolton	1	Swansea	2
HT 1-1	Sinclair 6		
Fulham	2	Wigan	1
HT 1-0	Boyce 57		
Reading	0	Sheff Wed	2
HT 0-0	Att 25,689		
Newcastle	3	Stoke	0
HT 2-0	Att 52,162		
Q.P.R.	L	Spurs	L
HT L-L			

HOME											AWAY										
P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	Pt
Man Utd	34	14	1	2	46	15	12	3	2	36	13	82	34	14	1	2	46	15	12	3	2
Man City	34	16	1	0	51	10	8	4	5	34	17	77	34	16	1	0	51	10	8	4	5
Arsenal	35	12	3	3	36	14	8	2	7	31	29	65	35	12	3	3	36	14	8	2	7
Newcastle	34	11	5	2	29	15	7	3	6	24	27	62	34	11	5	2	29	15	7	3	6
Spurs	33	11	3	3	35	17	6	5	5	22	21	59	33	11	3	3	35	17	6	5	5
Chelsea	34	10	3	3	33	20	6	7	5	23	18	58	34	10	3	3	33	20	6	7	5
Everton	33	8	3	6	21	14	5	5	6	17	20	47	33	8	3	6	21	14	5	5	6
Liverpool	33	5	9	2	20	13	7	1	20	23	48	33	5	9	2	20	13	7	1	20	23
Fulham	34	9	5	4	34	25	3	5	8	11	19	46	34	9	5	4	34	25	3	5	8
Sunderland	35	7	6	4	24	14	4	5	9	18	27	44	35	7	6	4	24	14	4	5	9
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Norwich	35	6	6	5	26	27	5	4	9	21	33	43	35	6	6	5	26	27	5	4	9
W.B.A.	34	0	2	9	19	19	6	7	21	28	42	34	0	2	9	19	19	6	7	21	28
Stoke	34	7	5	4	21	16	4	4	10	11	32	42	34	7	5	4	21	16	4	4	10
A. Villa	34	4	6	7	18	22	3	9	5	17	26	36	34	4	6	7	18	22	3	9	5
Wigan	35	3	7	7	15	25	3	3	10	19	35	34	35	3	7	7	15	25	3	3	10
Q.P.R.	34	5	5	7	22	25	3	2	12	16	32	31	34	5	5	7	22	25	3	2	12
Blackburn	35	6	1	11	26	32	2	6	9	21	41	31	35	6	1	11	26	32	2	6	9
Bolton	34	3	10	20	33	5	0	11	17	33	30	34	3	10	20	33	5	0	11	17	33
Wolves	34	3	2	12	19	41	2	6	9	15	32	23	34	3	2	12	19	41	2	6	9

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Blackpool	4	Burnley	0
HT 1-0	Att 14,141		
Brighton	1	Birmingham	1
HT 0-0	Redmond 69		
Bristol C	2	Barnsley	0
HT 0-0	Att 20,594		
Cardiff	1	Leeds Utd.	1
HT 0-0	Att 25,109		
Coventry	0	Doncaster	0
HT 0-0	Att 18,562		
Hull	2	Nottm For	0
HT 0-0	Majewski 30		
Ipswich	0	Millwall	3
HT 0-0	Att 20,786		
Middlesbro	L	SAINTS	L
HT 1-1	Att 18,947		
Peterboro	2	Watford	2
HT 1-1	Att 22,456		
POMPEY	1	Derby City	2
HT 0-1	Att 17,707		
Reading	2	Crystal P	2
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	HOME										AWAY				
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt			
Reading	45	14	5	4	36	18	13	3	6	33	21	89			
SAINTS	44	15	4	3	45	18	10	6	6	35	26	85			
West Ham	44	10	8	4	39	25	12	6	4	38	21	80			
Blackpool	45	13	7	3	42	21	7	7	8	35	36	74			
Birmingham	45	12	9	1	35	14	7	7	9	41	37	73			
Cardiff	45	11	7	5	37	29	7	11	4	27	23	72			
Hull	45	12	4	7	28	22	7	7	8	18	20	68			
Middlesbro	44	7	10	5	20	20	10	6	6	29	28	67			
Brighton	45	11	8	4	36	21	6	8	16	31	65	45			
Leicester	44	11	6	5	35	20	6	6	10	28	32	63			
Derby City	45	11	3	8	27	22	7	6	10	22	35	63			
Burnley	45	7	8	7	32	26	10	21	28	31	61	45			
Leeds Utd	45	9	3	10	33	39	8	7	8	31	27	61			
Watford	45	9	6	7	30	32	6	10	7	24	31	61			
Ipswich	45	11	3	9	39	32	5	7	10	27	43	58			
Millwall	45	7	6	9	25	28	8	5	10	28	27	58			
Crystal P	45	7	11	4	21	17	6	6	11	24	32	56			
Peterboro	45	10	3	10	41	38	3	7	12	25	38	49			
Bristol C	45	7	10	6	26	32	5	6	11	17	35	48			
Nottm For	45	5	12	19	32	8	13	27	31	47	47	45			
Barnsley	45	9	3	10	31	37	4	5	14	18	37	47			
POMPEY	45	10	5	8	30	24	3	6	13	20	33	40			
Coventry	45	8	7	8	28	26	1	6	15	13	35	40			
Doncaster	45	4	8	10	20	32	4	1	6	21	15	45			
*Portsmouth deducted 10 points for entering administration															